おやすみプンプン 3 浅野いにお

YOUNG SUNDAY COMICS

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小学館
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おやすみプンプン ❸

浅野いにお

YOUNG SUNDAY COMICS

2巻までのあらすじ

ブンブンは、なんだかんだで
とるに足らない中学生になったようです。

登場人物

小野寺ブンブン
旧姓・ブン山ブンブン。チョコパイ好きのヤングガイ。

小野寺ブンブンママ
ブンブンの母親。離婚後も性格は相変わらず。

小野寺雄一
ブンブンママの弟。33歳。ブンブンと同居中。

田中愛子
小学生時代に好きだった女の子。二年間会話は一切無し。

小松
同級生。生粋の右利き。バドミントン部所属。

関
同級生。アル中気味の父親を持つ。

清水
同級生。関とは幼なじみ。

先輩
バドミントン部の先輩。

湯上
ブンブンママの離婚問題を担当した弁護士。

喫茶店の女の子
雄一はどこかで見憶えがあるようだが…!?

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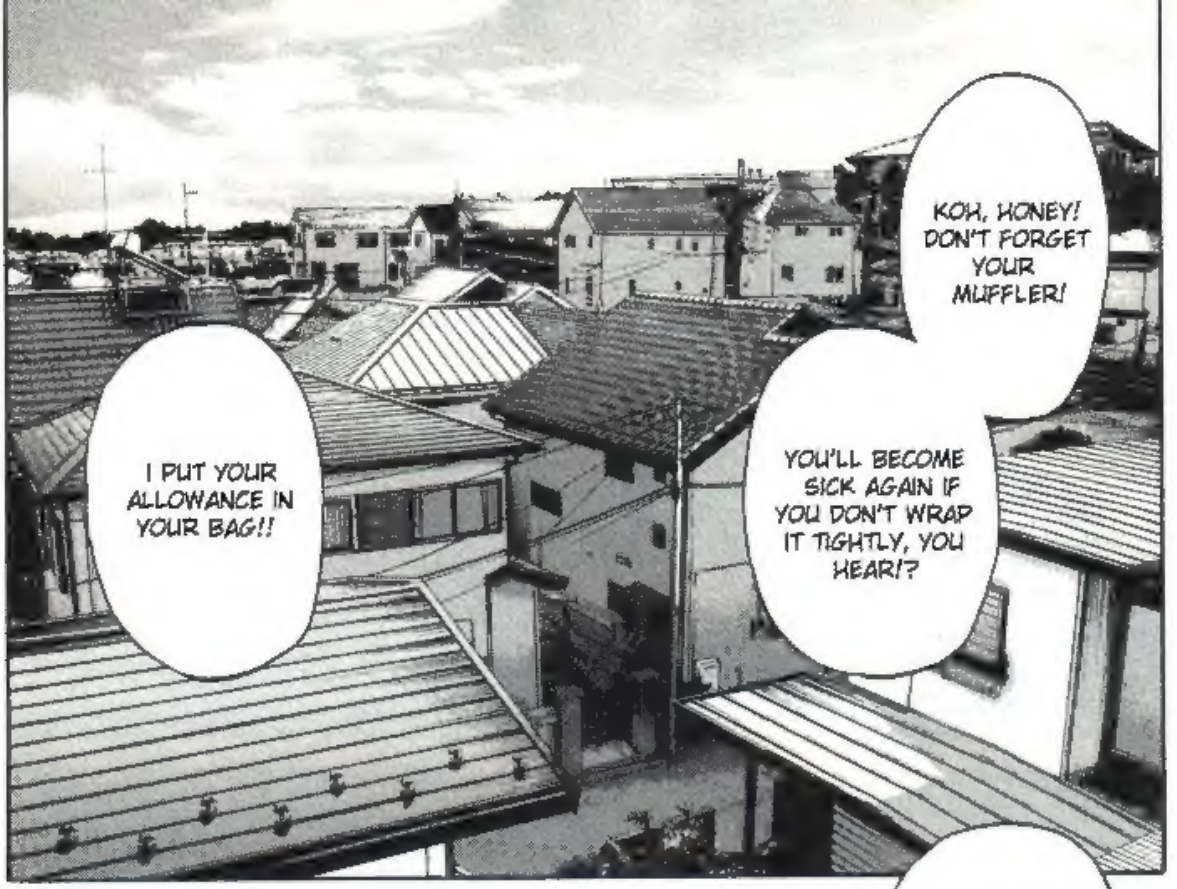
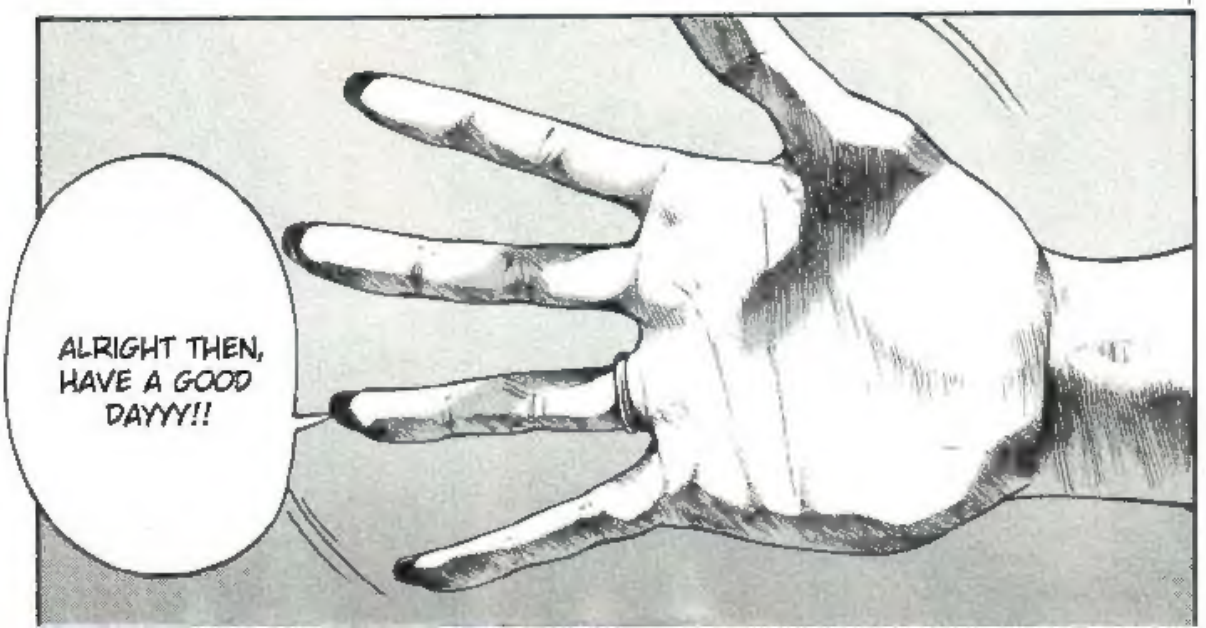
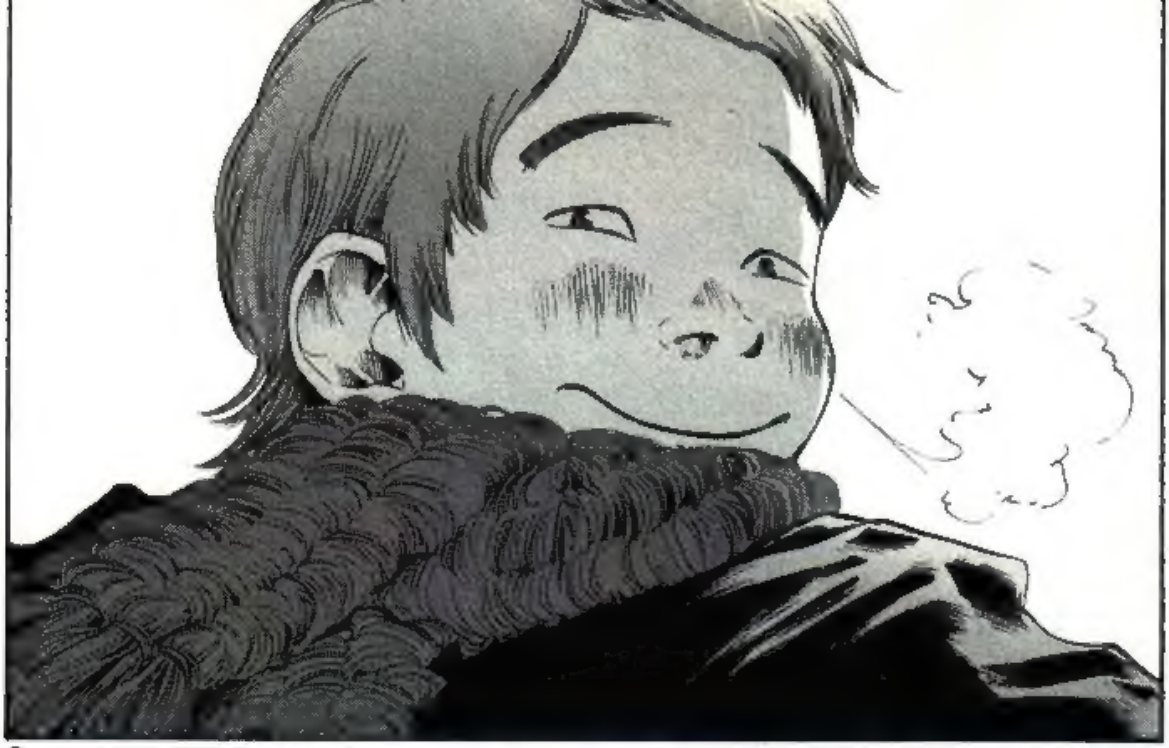

KOH, HONEY! DON'T FORGET YOUR MUFFLER!
I PUT YOUR ALLOWANCE IN YOUR BAG!!
YOU'LL BECOME SICK AGAIN IF YOU DON'T WRAP IT TIGHTLY, YOU HEAR!?

MAMA WILL BE WAITING HOME WITH YOUR FAVOURITE MEAL SO HURRY BACK HOME AFTER SCHOOL!
WELL?
GOOD,
THAT'S MY BRIGHT CHILD!


ALRIGHT THEN, HAVE A GOOD DAYYY!!



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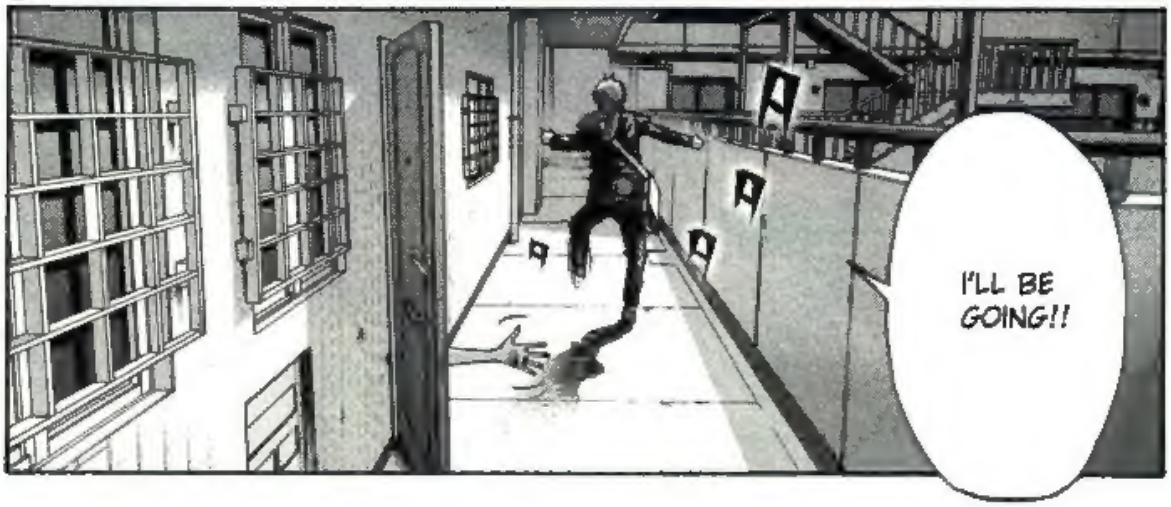
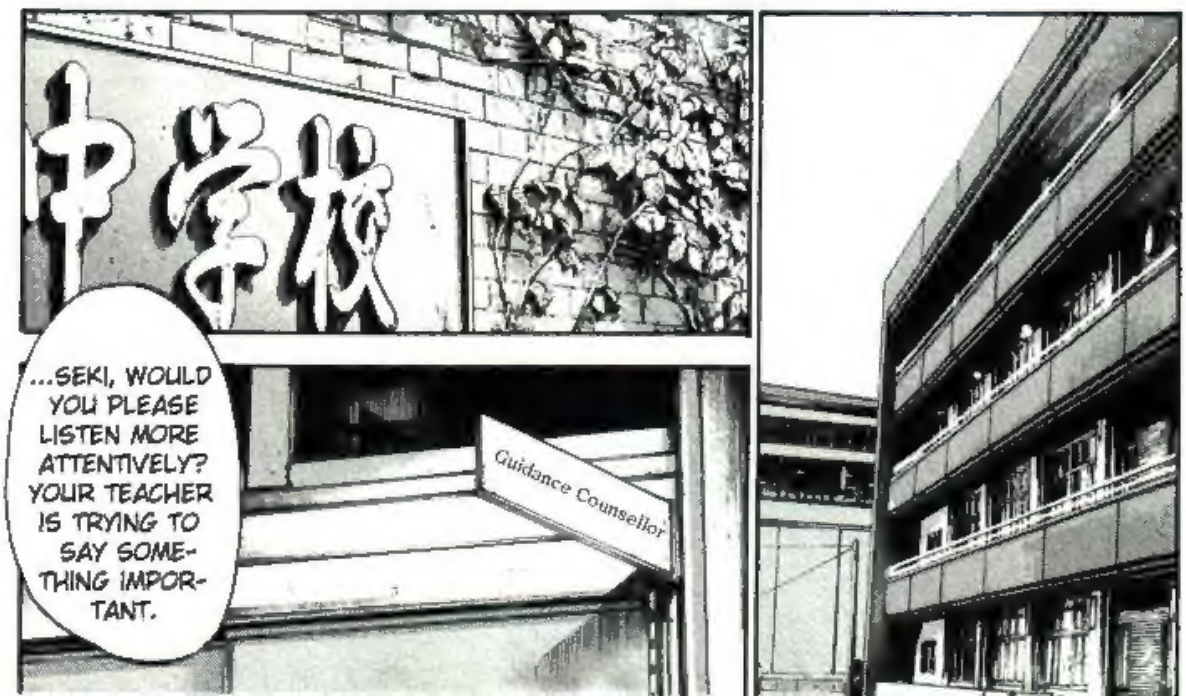

I'LL BE GOING!!


中学校
...SEKI, WOULD YOU PLEASE LISTEN MORE ATTENTIVELY? YOUR TEACHER IS TRYING TO SAY SOMETHING IMPORTANT.
Guidance Counsellor

YOU'RE EITHER LATE OR ABSENT MOST OF THE TIME AND EVER SINCE 3RD SEMESTER STARTED, YOU HAVEN'T EVEN SHOWN UP FOR THE BARE MINIMUM NUMBER OF CLASSES.
COMPARED TO 1ST SEMESTER, YOUR GRADES HAVE DROPPED AS WELL.
ARE YOU HANGING OUT WITH THE WRONG CROWD RIGHT NOW OR WHAT?
TEACHER,

I AIN'T HANGING OUT WITH ANYONE AND I AIN'T TROUBLING ANYONE.
I'M NOT VERY BRIGHT SO IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW MUCH STUDYING I DO.
WHY CAN'T I MAKE MY OWN DECISIONS FOR MYSELF? JUST LEAVE ME BE.

...SEKI, SOCIETY ISN'T AS WARM AS YOU THINK IT IS.
A TRULY INTELLIGENT PERSON MANAGES BOTH HIS ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL SIDES WELL.
SPEAKING FROM MY EXPERIENCE, GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL AND...
TEACHER!!

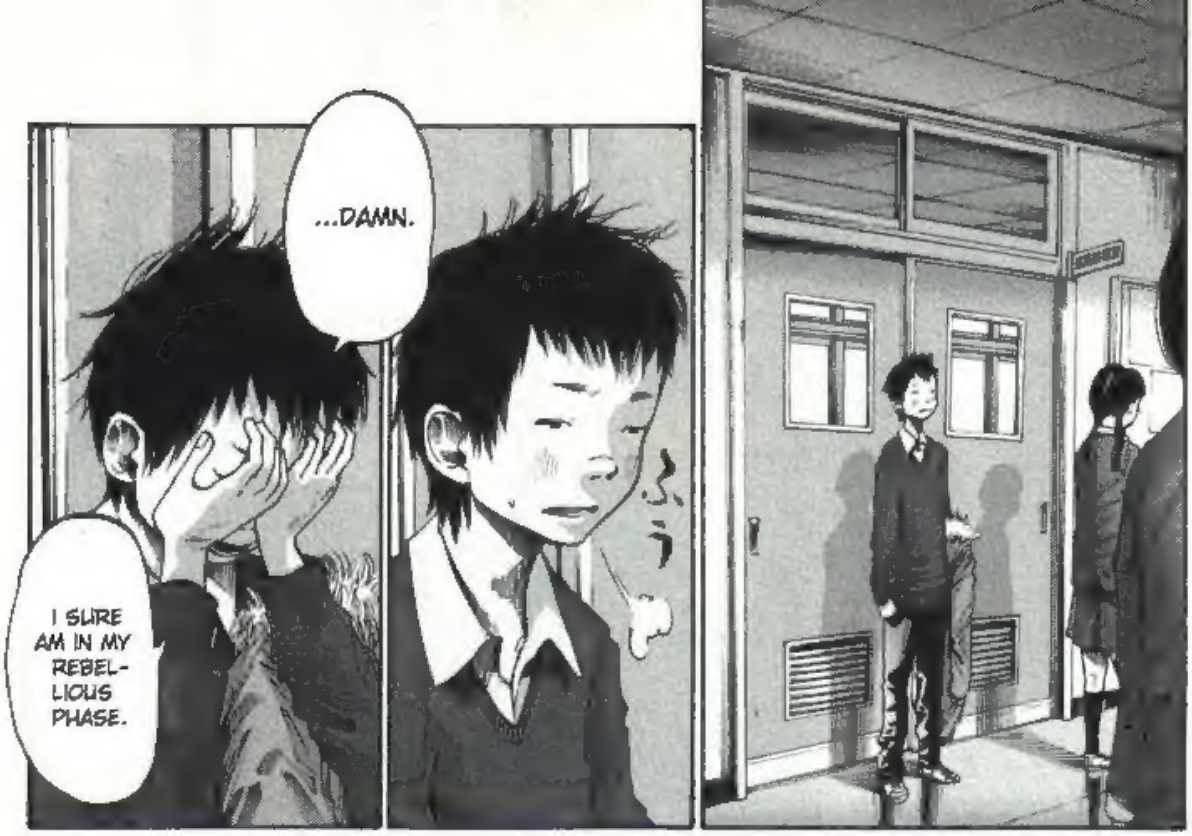
IS THAT REALLY APPROPRI-ATE FOR A TEACHER TO SAY?
I THOUGHT WE WERE HERE TO TALK ABOUT ME.
WHY DO YOU THINK THAT YOUR "EXPERIENCE" CAN SPEAK FOR EVERYONE?
IS THIS HOW INTELLIGENT ADULTS ARGUE BACK?

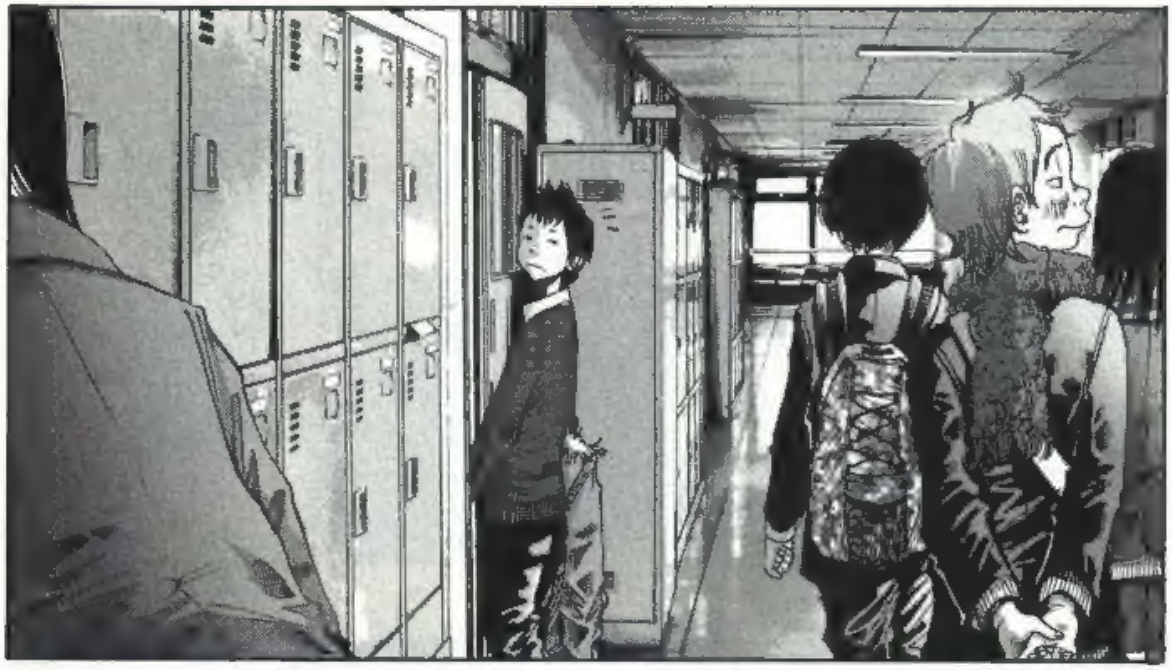
...FINE.
BUT MY DAD'S A DRUNK SO I DON'T THINK IT'LL BE ANY GOOD.

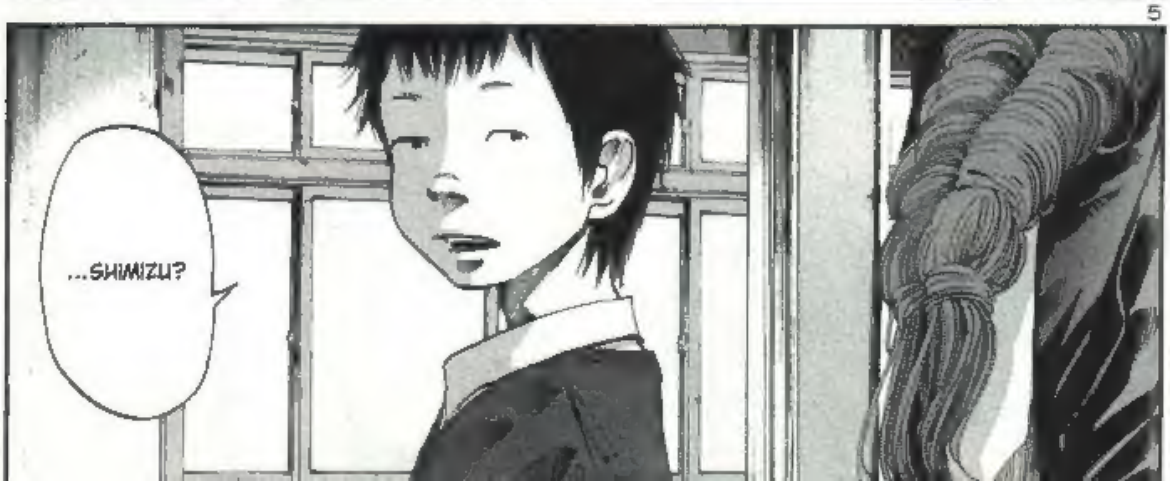
...FINE, I GOT IT.
I'LL BE HAVING A PARENT-TEACHER MEETING LATER THIS WEEK SO I'LL JUST TELL YOUR PARENTS THEN.

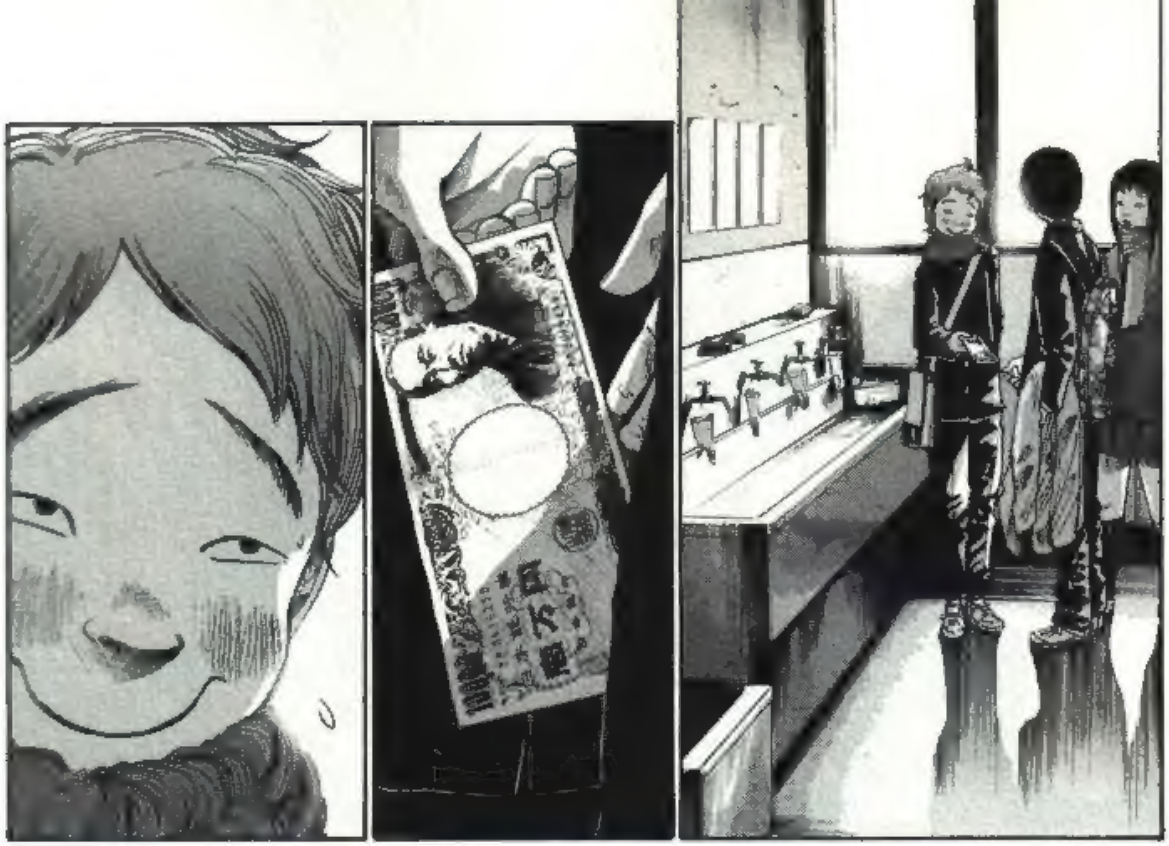
4

WHAT-EVER.
JUST GO.


...DAMN.
I SURE AM IN MY REBEL-LIOUS PHASE.




...SHIMIZU?



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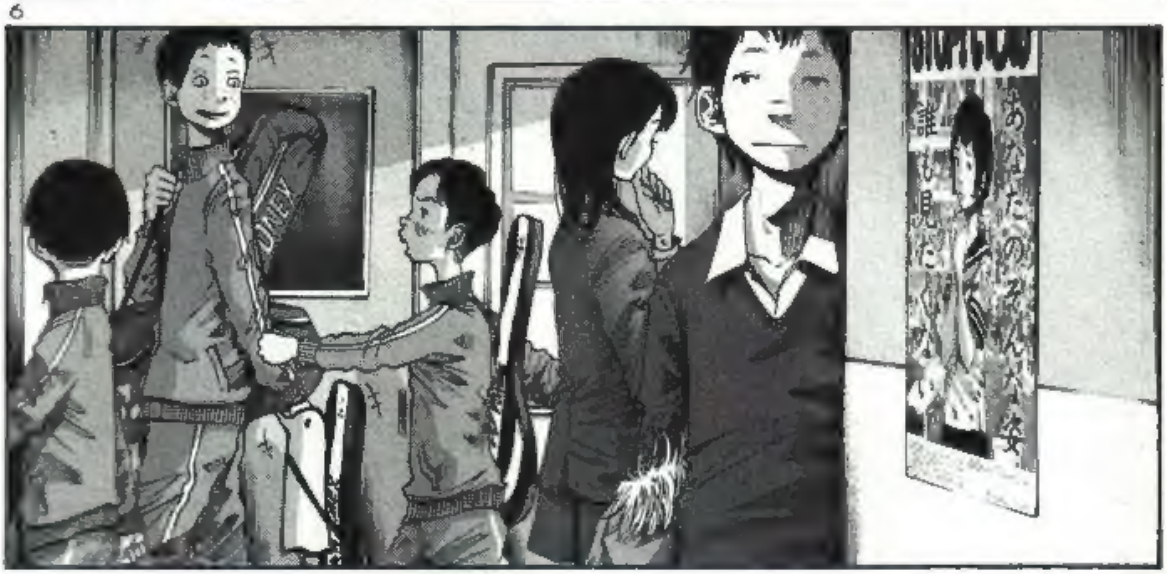
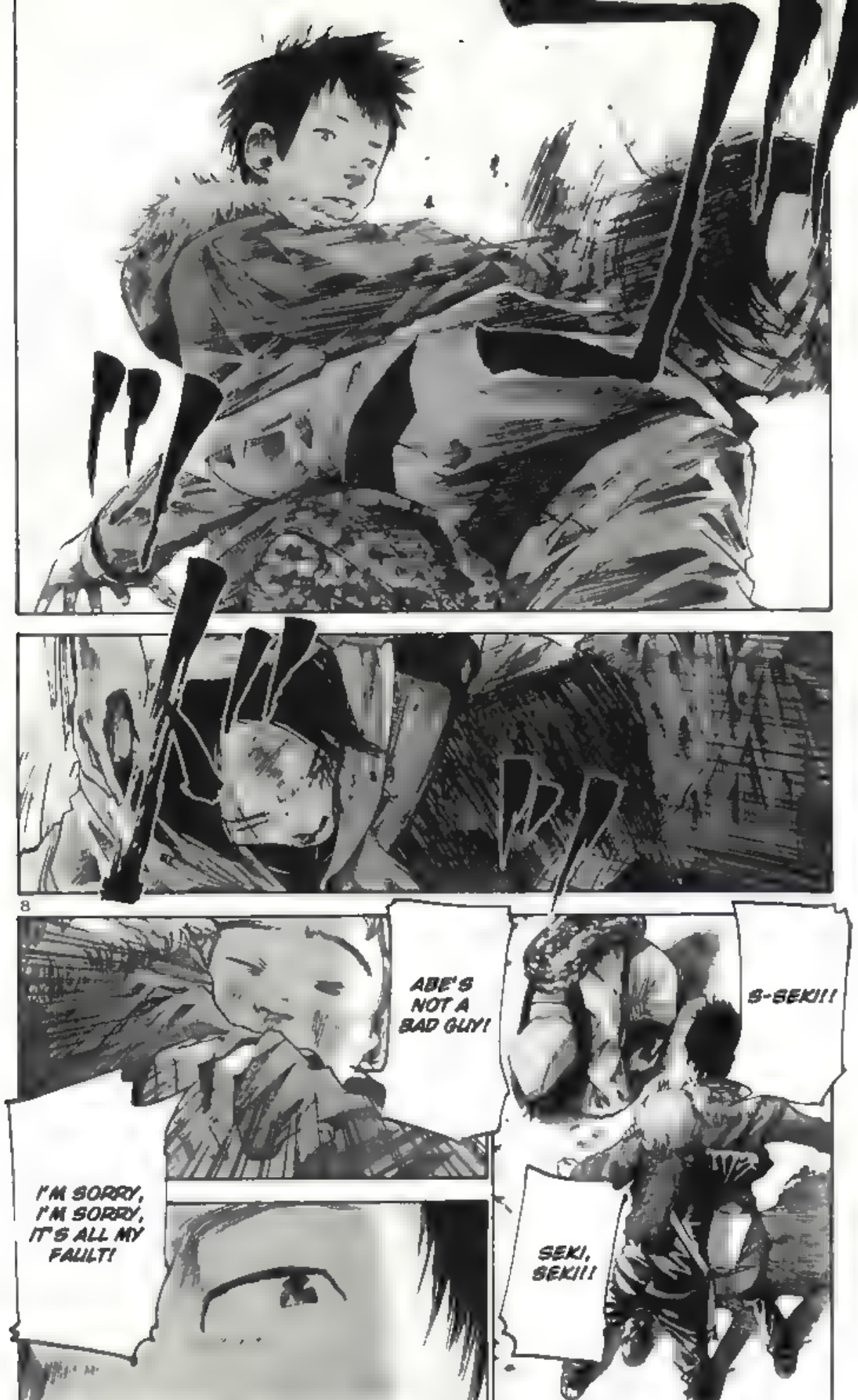


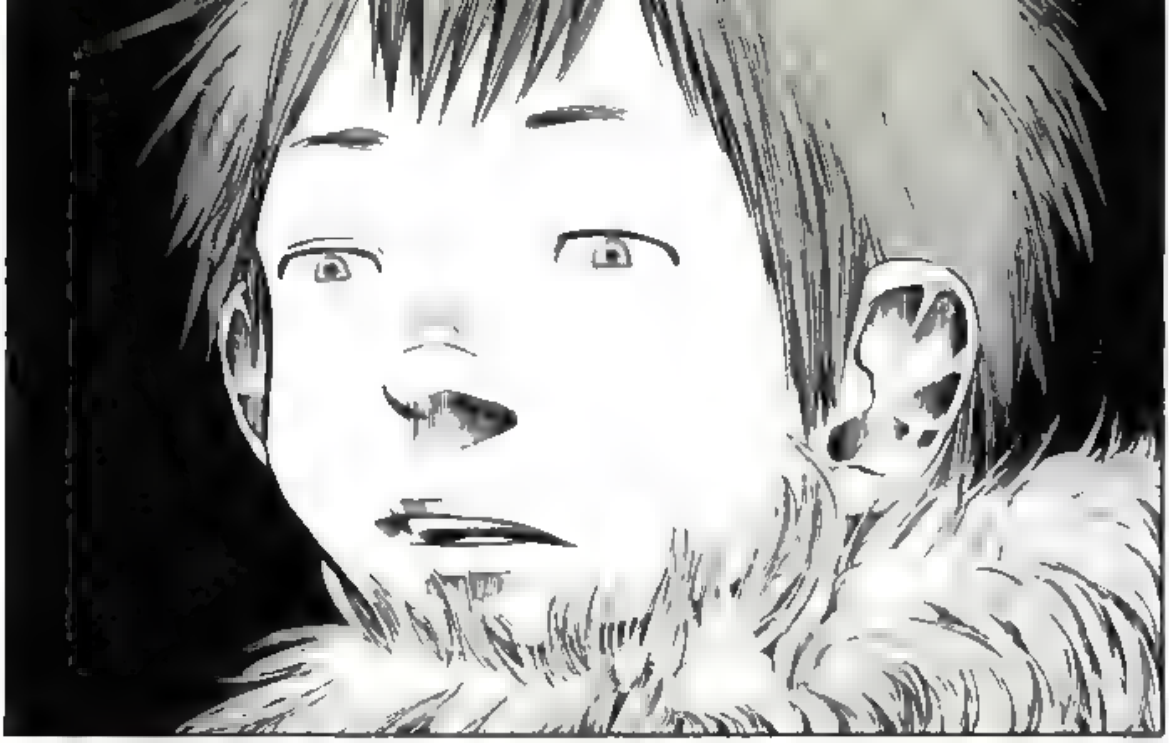
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT!?
SHIMIZU GAVE IT TO ME OUT OF HIS OWN FREE WILL!

MONEY IS SOMETHING YOU WORK HARD AND EARN.
WHAT'S UP WITH THAT LOGIC?
WHY AM I EVEN TALKING TO A RETARD LIKE YOU ANYWAYS!!
YOU AND YOUR LONER-POSING, WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE ANYWAYS!
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THAT'S AN ABSOLUTE TRUTH?
AN IDIOT LIKE YOU SHOULDN'T BE PRETENDING TO BE RIGHTEOU...


8
ABE'S NOT A BAD GUY!
I'M SORRY, I'M SORRY, IT'S ALL MY FAULT!
S-SEKI!!
SEKI, SEKI!!

THAT'S NOT THE PROBLEM HERE!
THAT'S NOT IT, YOU FUCKER!
JUST THINK ABOUT IT!!!

IT DOESN'T MATTER THAT YOU'RE A GIRL.
...NEXT UP IS YOU, HUH.
HA..HA... WHY ARE YOU...
I WAS ONLY WATCHING BY.
I'M NOT EVEN EXACTLY SURE WHAT'S GOING ON...
GOD, YOU'RE SUCH A CREEP!
I'M NOT SCARED OF YOU!
NOT EVEN THE SLIGHTEST!
THINK YOU'RE SO COOL?
YOU'RE JUST A LOSER..



AHAHA, IS THIS FOR REAL!?
THIS KID IS ACTUALLY AFRAID OF FIRE!!
HUH?
WHAT?
WHAT, WHAT, WHAT?

MUTTS LIKE YOU WON'T EVER BE OF ANY USE TO SOCIETY,
HAHA, SEKI...
HOW PATHETIC
SO ALL YOU MISFITS,
SHOULD JUST DIE.
YOU'RE ACTING JUST LIKE THE DOG I HAVE AT HOME!

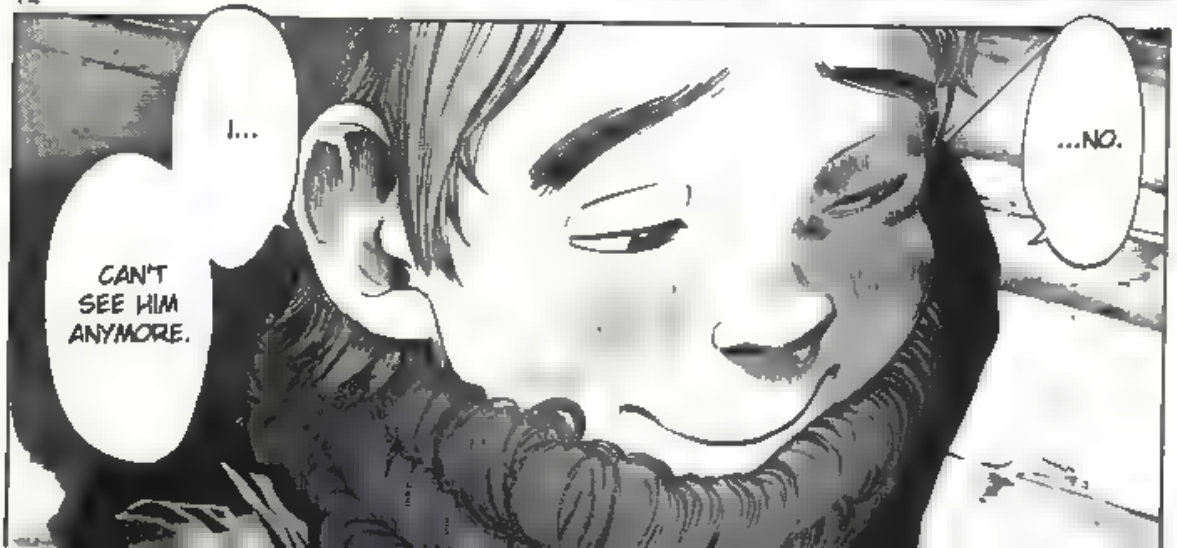
I'M SORRY ...

SEKI...
I JUST...
WANTED TO,
GET ALONG WITH EVERYONE WELL...

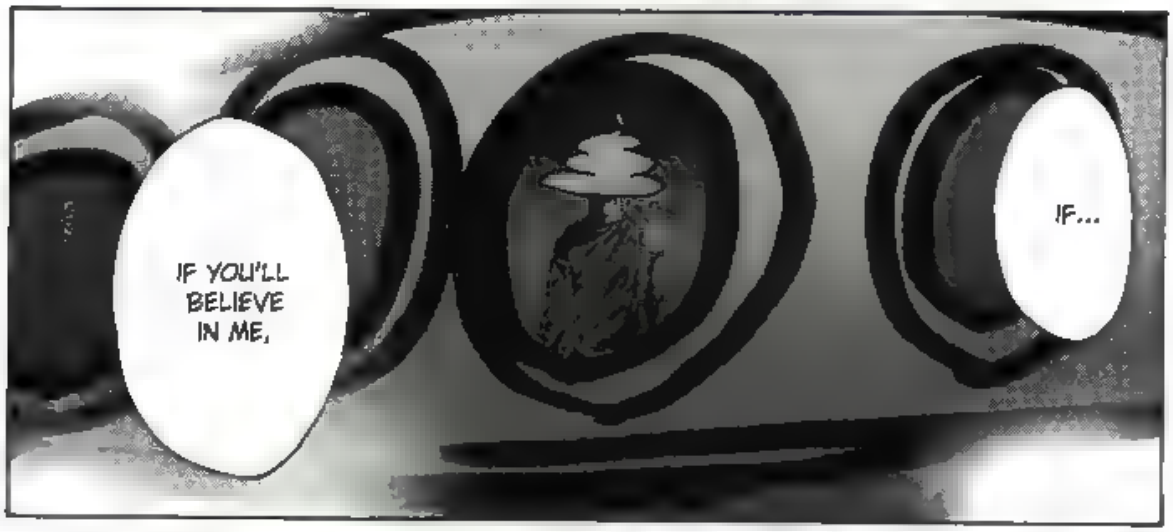
THAT'S IMPOS-SIBLE.
WE'E ALL IDIOTS. YOU, ME, EVERYONE.
I KNOW VERY WELL.

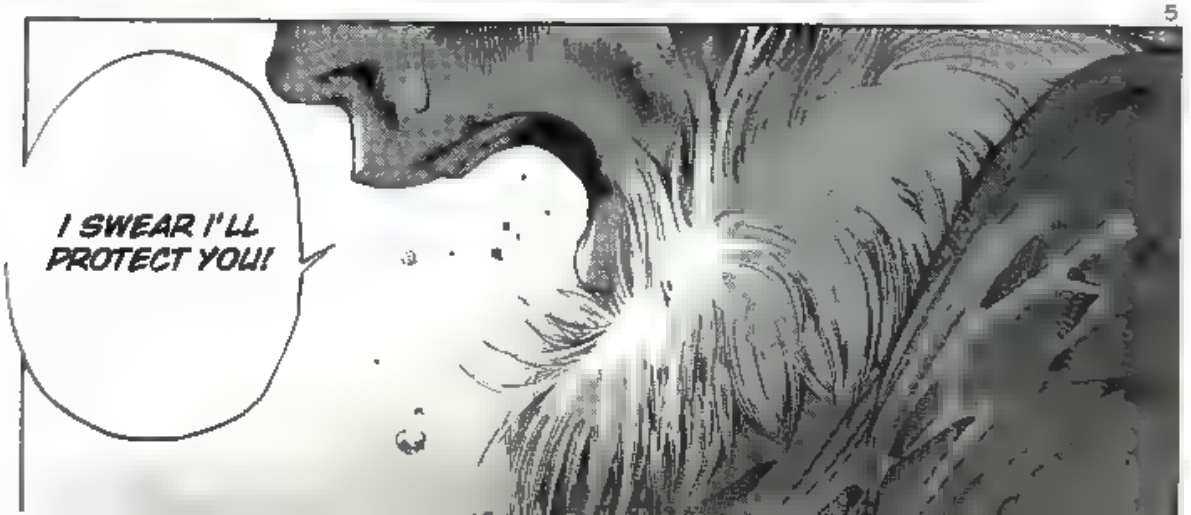
AH...
WHY DO THINGS NEVER GO WELL...

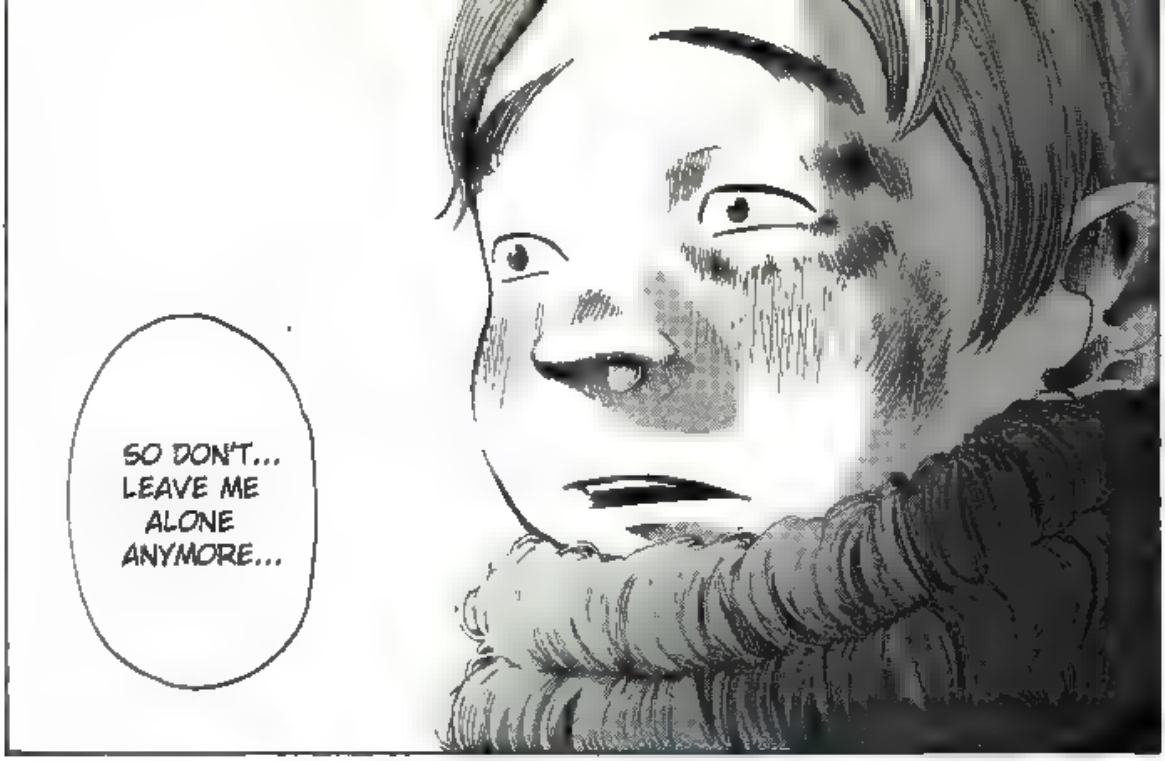
HEY SHIMIZU,
YOU USED TO SAY YOU COULD SEE GOD BACK IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, RIGHT?
HOW ABOUT NOW? CAN YOU STILL SEE HIM?


I...
CAN'T SEE HIM ANYMORE.
...NO.

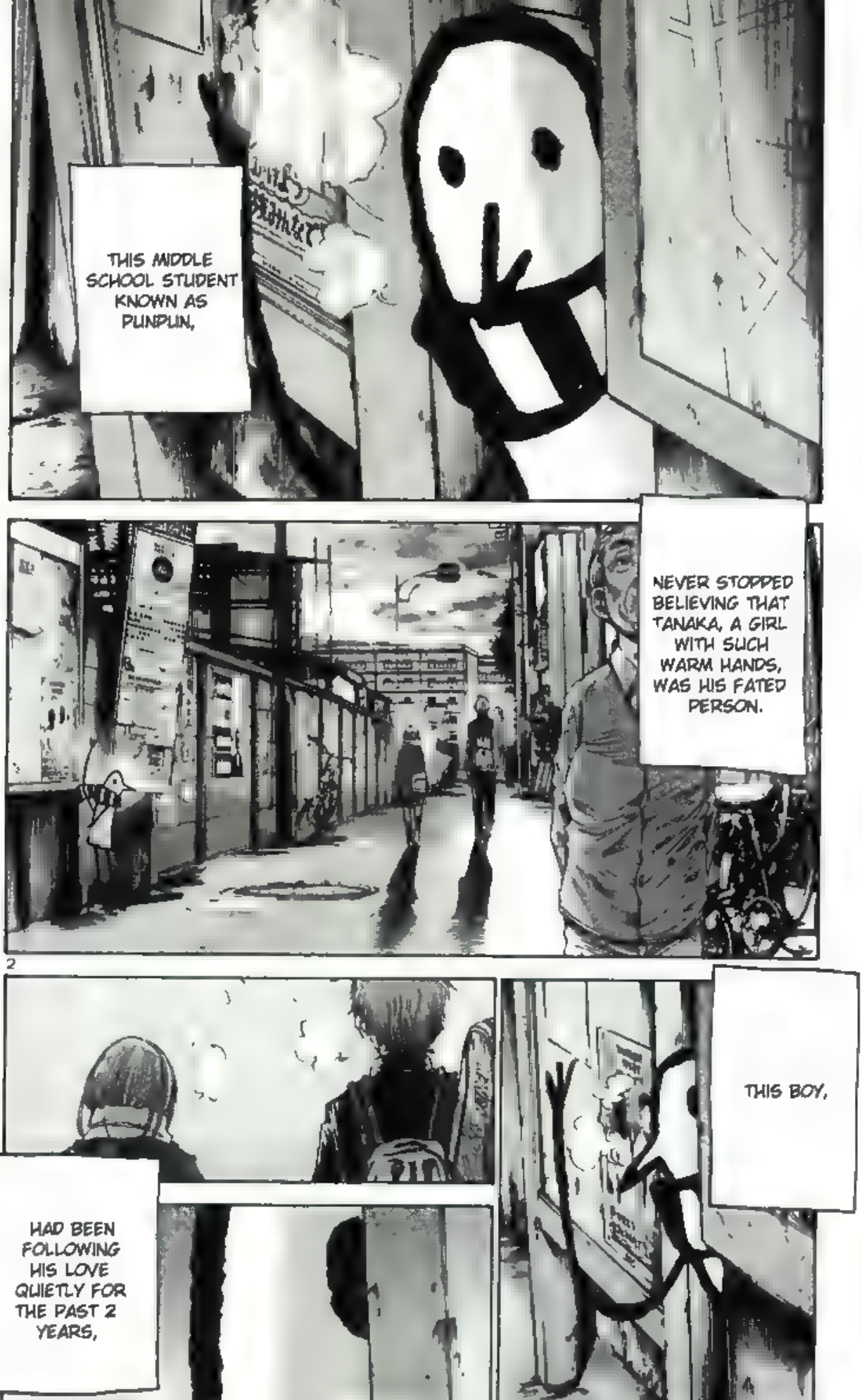
SEKI,
AREN'T YOU LONELY BEING BY YOURSELF ALL THE TIME?
...FIGURED. THERE'S NO WAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT WOULD EXIST IN THIS WORLD.
IN THE END, PEOPLE CAN ONLY RELY ON THEMSELVES.

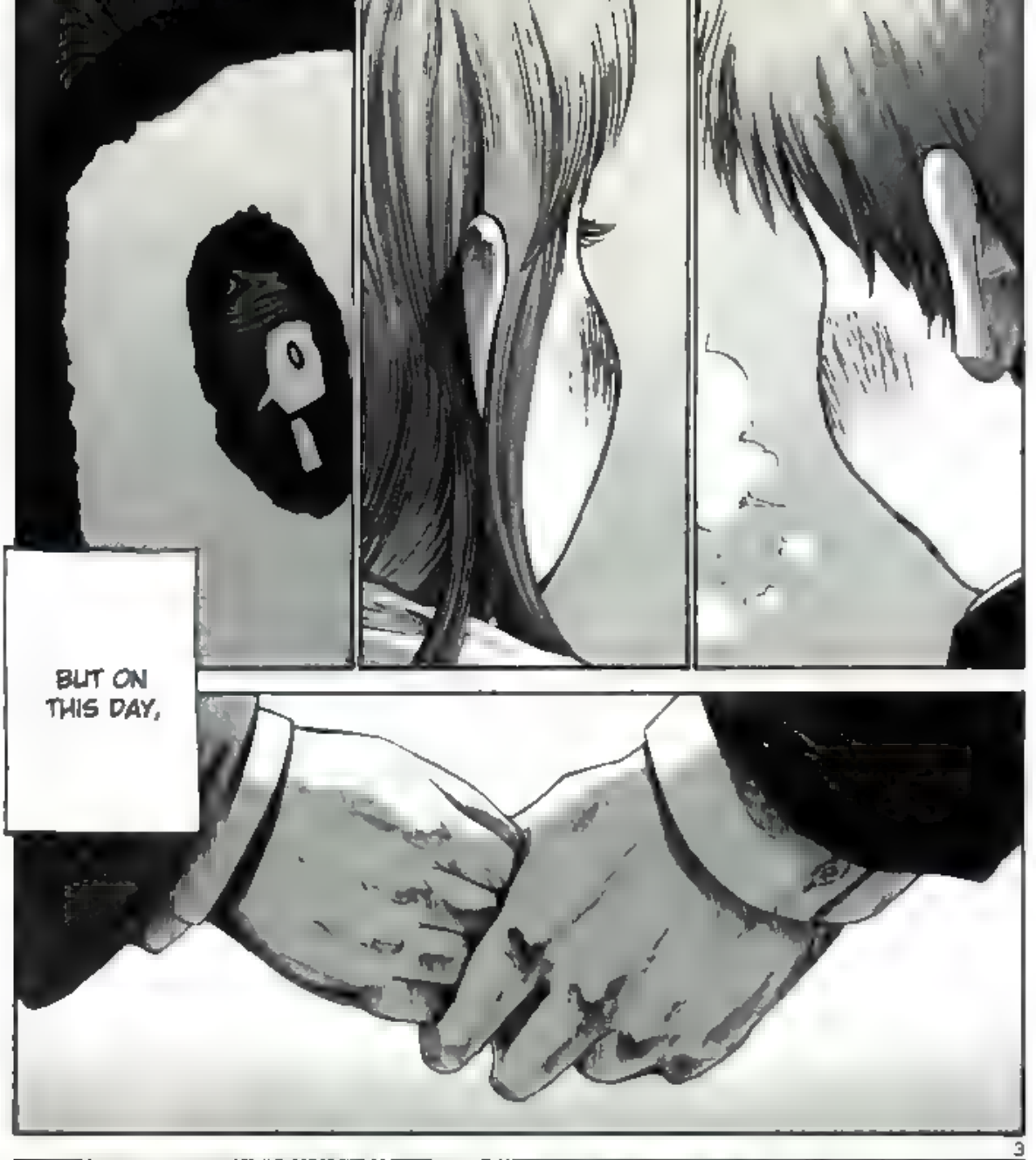

IF YOU'LL BELIEVE IN ME,
IF...


I SWEAR I'LL PROTECT YOU!


SO DON'T...
LEAVE ME
ALONE
ANYMORE...

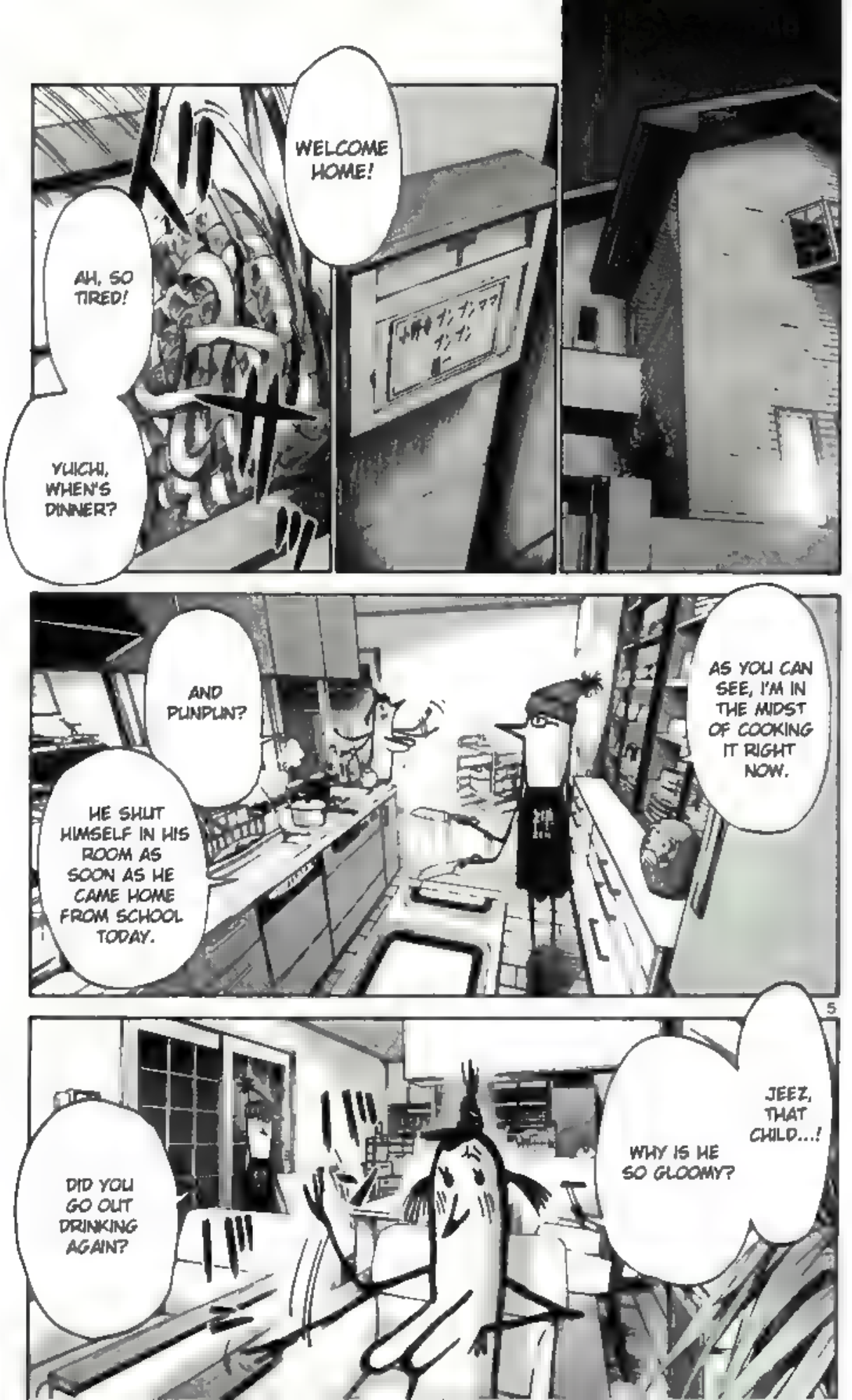
...OK!!
SCANLATED BY·HOX


THIS MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT KNOWN AS PUNPUN,
NEVER STOPPED BELIEVING THAT TANAKA, A GIRL WITH SUCH WARM HANDS, WAS HIS FATED PERSON.
2
THIS BOY,
HAD BEEN FOLLOWING HIS LOVE QUIETLY FOR THE PAST 2 YEARS,
4


BUT ON THIS DAY,

HE WIT-NESSED THE CLEAR-CUT TRUTH!!

4


WELCOME HOME!
AH, SO TIRED!
YUICHI, WHEN'S DINNER?
AS YOU CAN SEE, I'M IN THE MIDST OF COOKING IT RIGHT NOW.
AND PUNPUN?
HE SHUT HIMSELF IN HIS ROOM AS SOON AS HE CAME HOME FROM SCHOOL TODAY.
JEEZ, THAT CHILD...!
WHY IS HE SO GLOOMY?
DID YOU GO OUT DRINKING AGAIN?

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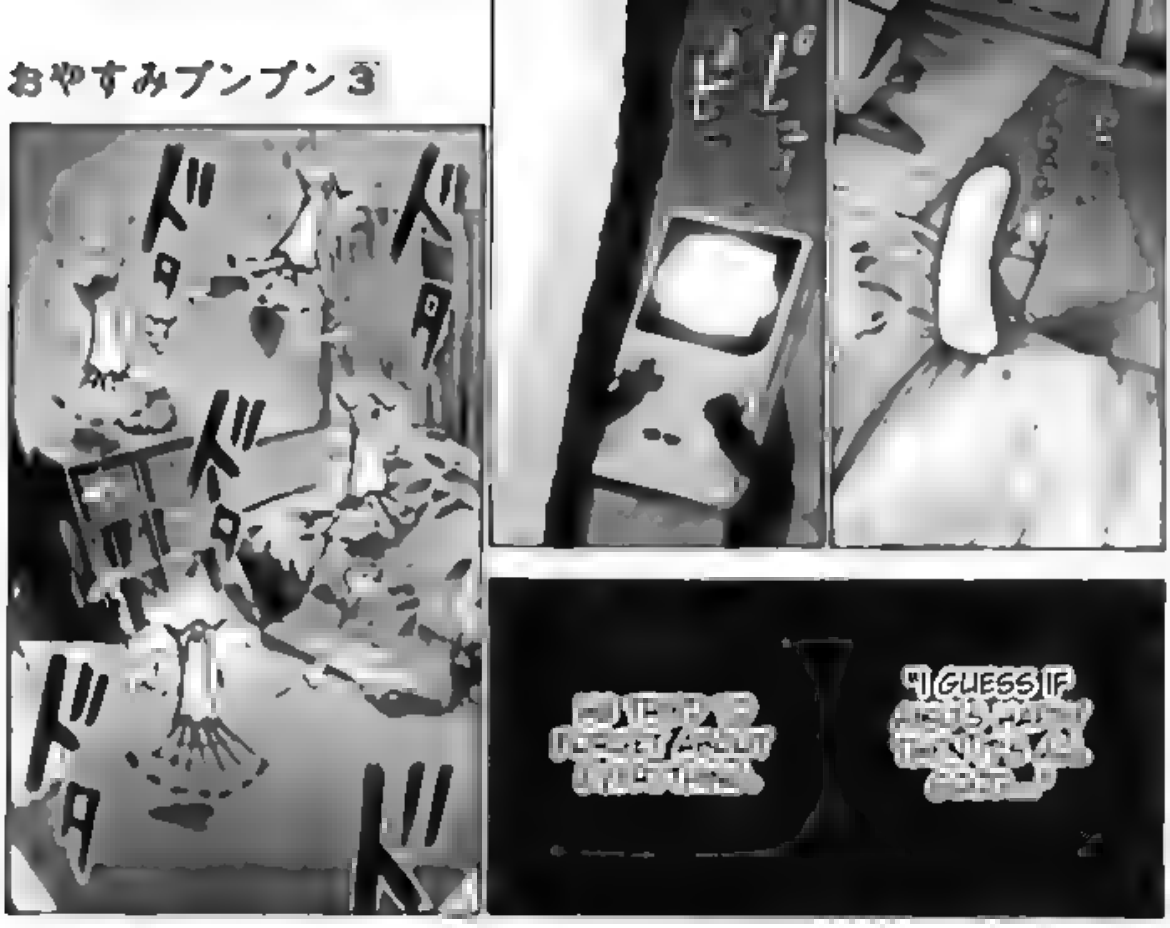
PUNPUN
DECIDED,


ピピピ
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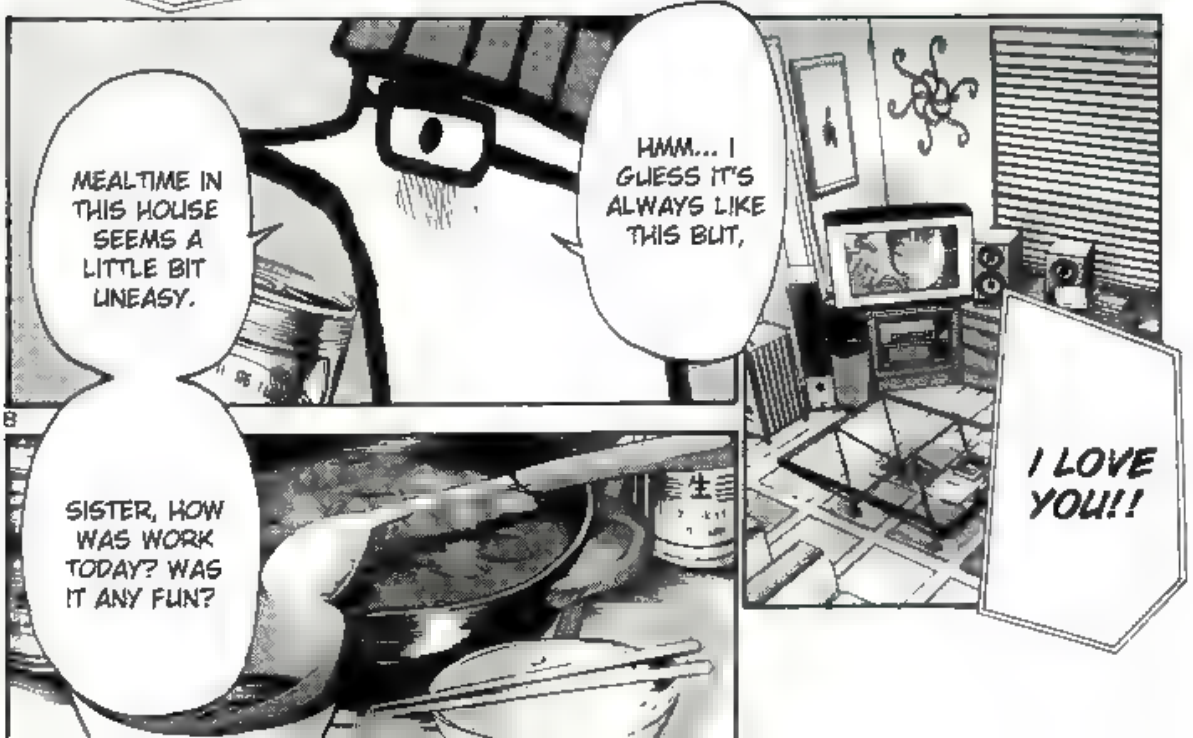
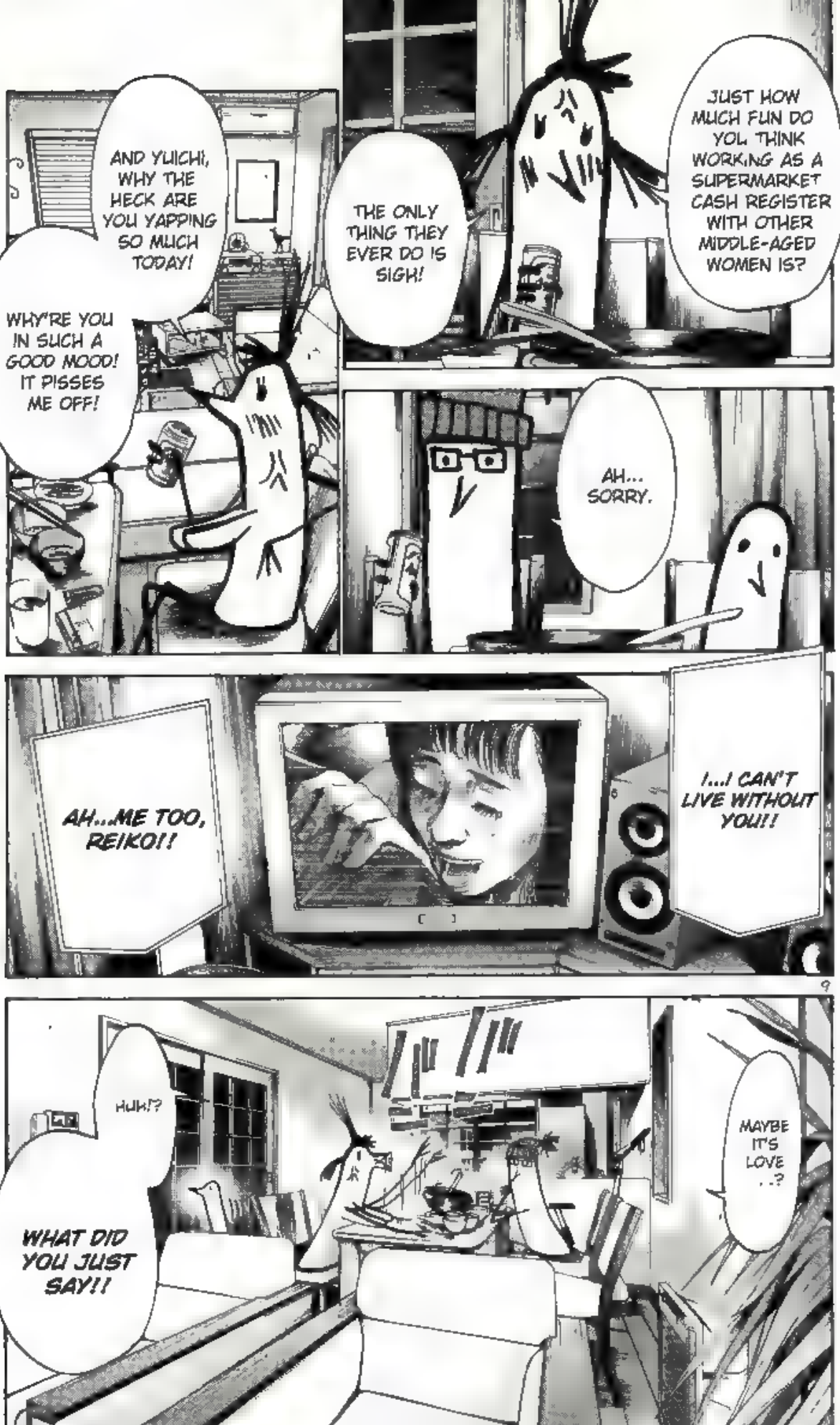
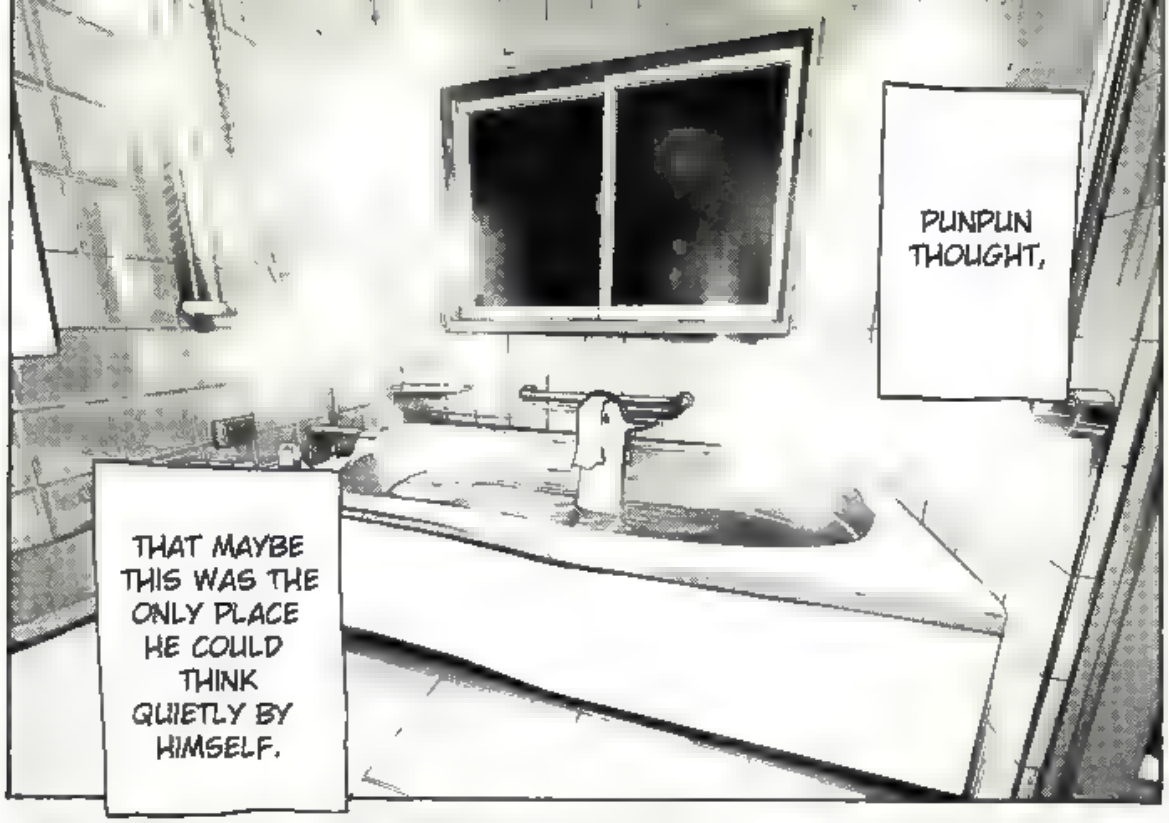
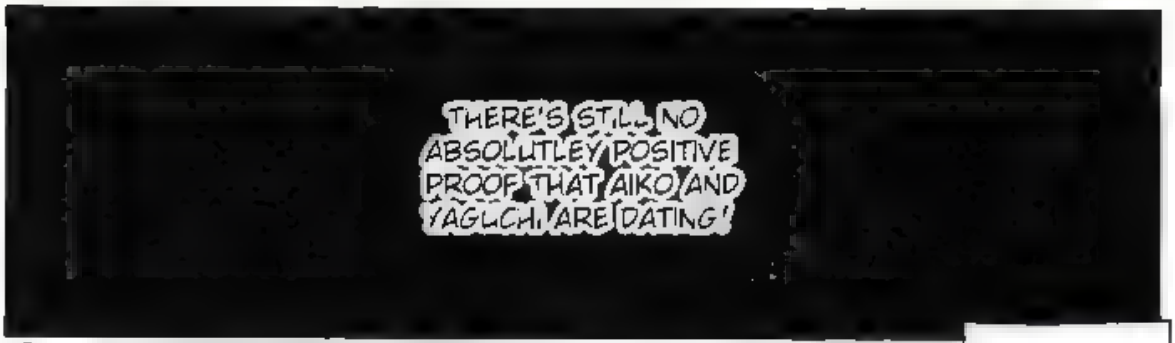
AHEM,
TO EVERYONE'S SURPRISE,
WE'LL BE HAVING TOMATO NABE.

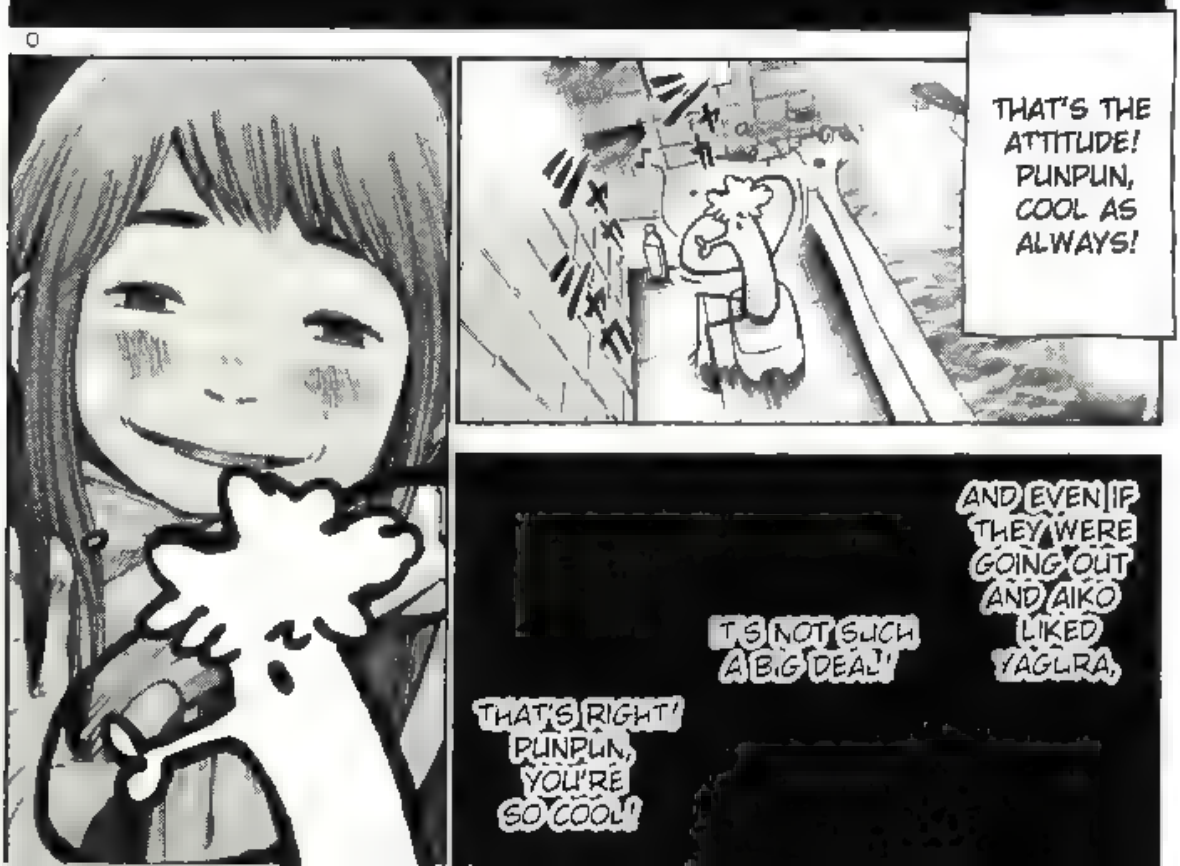
AH.... I...I!!
I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU!

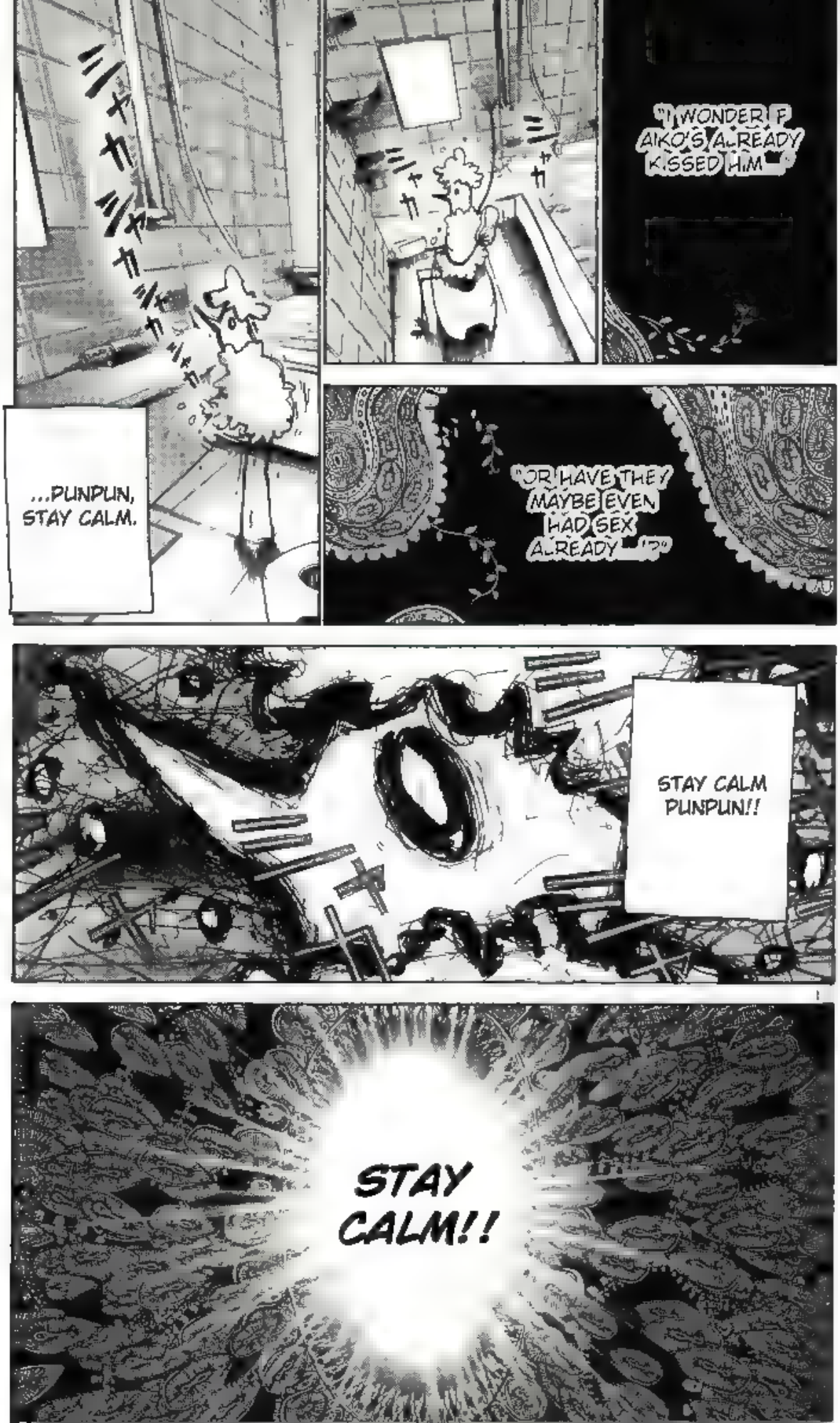

HMM... I GUESS IT'S ALWAYS LIKE THIS BUT,
MEALTIME IN THIS HOUSE SEEMS A LITTLE BIT UNEASY.
I LOVE YOU!!
SISTER, HOW WAS WORK TODAY? WAS IT ANY FUN?


JUST HOW MUCH FUN DO YOU THINK WORKING AS A SUPERMARKET CASH REGISTER WITH OTHER MIDDLE-AGED WOMEN IS?
THE ONLY THING THEY EVER DO IS SIGH!
AND YUICHI, WHY THE HECK ARE YOU YAPPING SO MUCH TODAY!
WHY'RE YOU IN SUCH A GOOD MOOD! IT PISSES ME OFF!
AH... SORRY.
AH...ME TOO, REIKO!!
I...I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT YOU!!
9
HUH!?
WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY!!
MAYBE IT'S LOVE...?


PUNPUN THOUGHT,
THAT MAYBE THIS WAS THE ONLY PLACE HE COULD THINK QUIETLY BY HIMSELF.

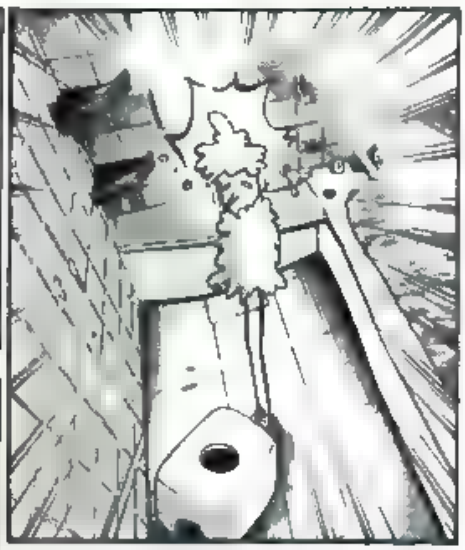

THERE'S STILL NO ABSOLUTLEY POSITIVE PROOF THAT AIKO AND YAGUCHI ARE DATING!


THAT'S THE ATTITUDE! PUNPUN, COOL AS ALWAYS!
AND EVEN IF THEY WERE GOING OUT AND AIKO LIKED YAGURA,
IT'S NOT SUCH A BIG DEAL!
THAT'S RIGHT! PUNPUN, YOU'RE SO COOL!


...PUNPUN, STAY CALM.
"I WONDER IF AIKO'S ALREADY KISSED HIM."
"OR HAVE THEY MAYBE EVEN HAD SEX ALREADY!?"
STAY CALM PUNPUN!!
STAY CALM!!

...PUNPUN!!

HOW LONG ARE YOU GOING TO STAY IN THERE!?



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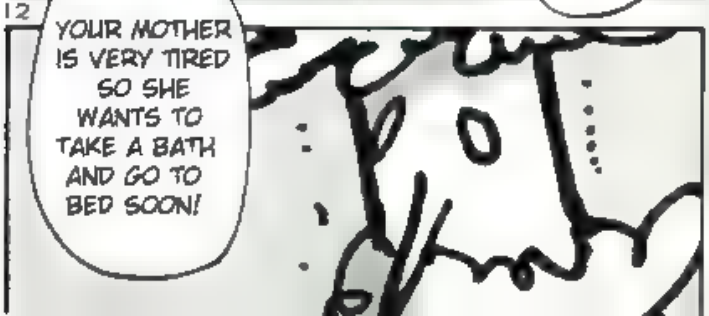
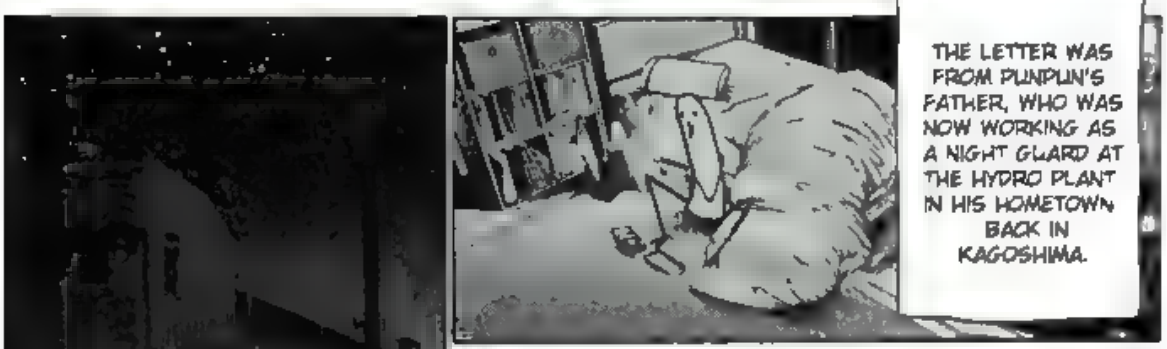
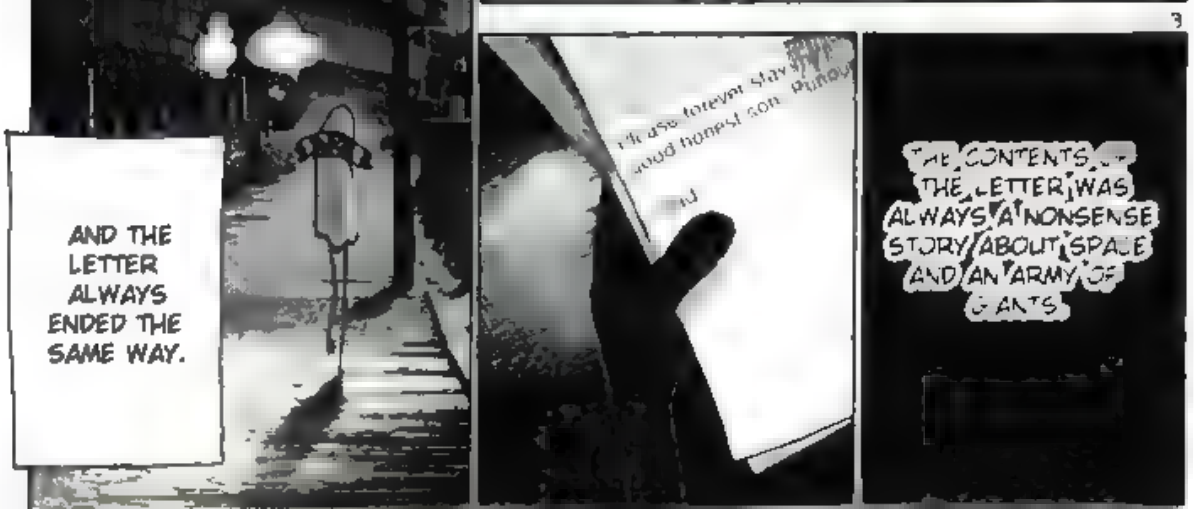

YOUR MOTHER IS VERY TIRED SO SHE WANTS TO TAKE A BATH AND GO TO BED SOON!
.....

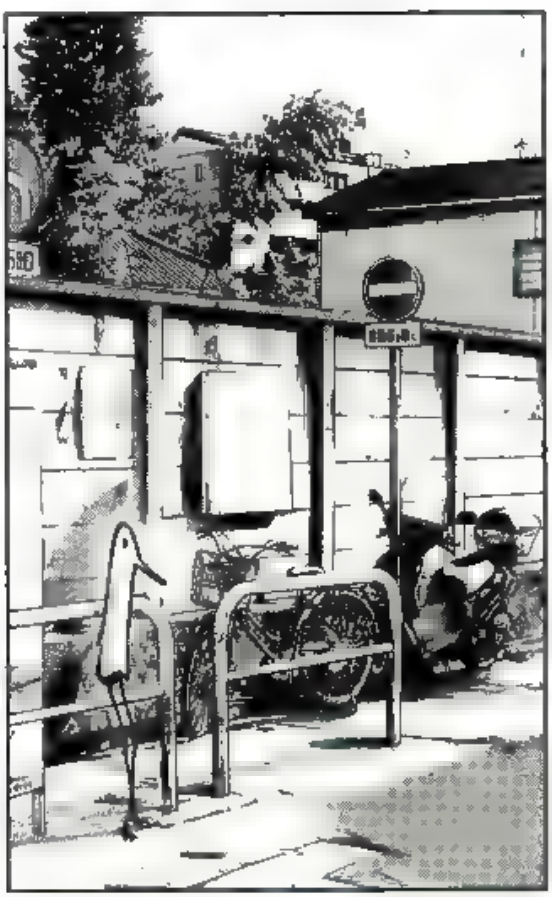
OH, AND THERE'S A LETTER FOR YOU.
...IT'S FROM HIM.
CAN'T BELIEVE HE SENDS A LETTER TO YOU EVERY MONTH.

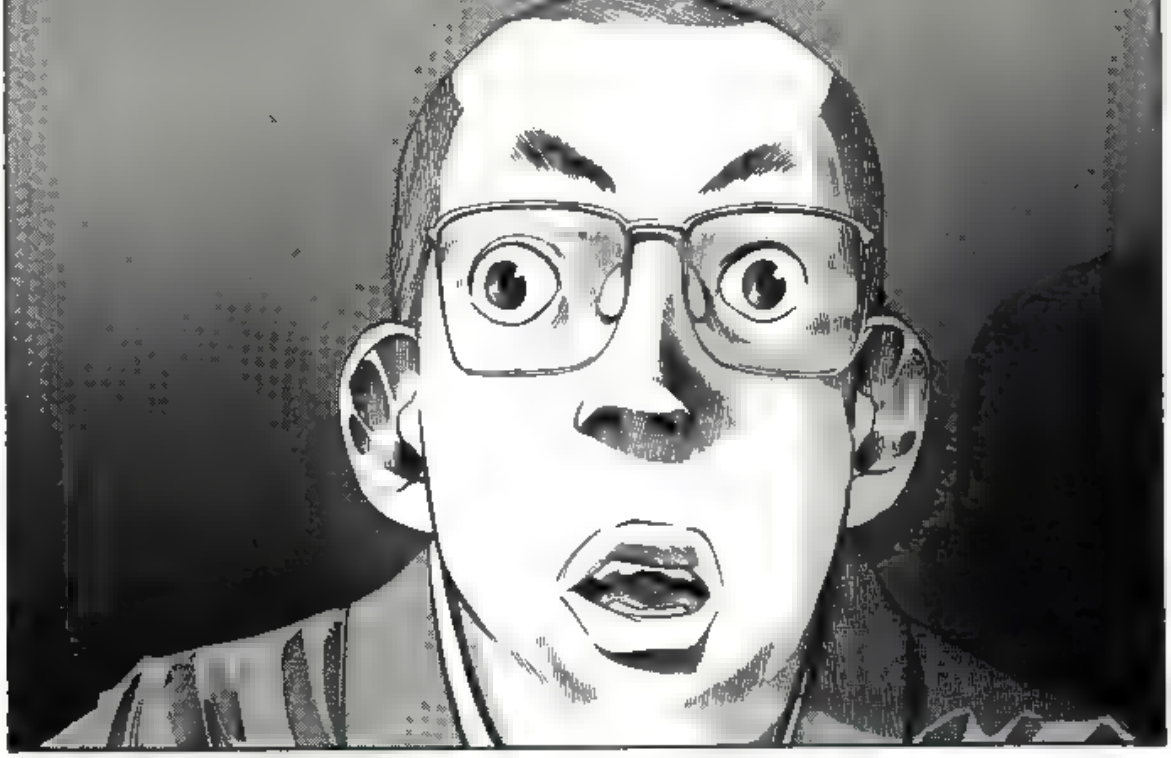

THE LETTER WAS FROM PUNPUN'S FATHER, WHO WAS NOW WORKING AS A NIGHT GUARD AT THE HYDRO PLANT IN HIS HOMETOWN BACK IN KAGOSHIMA.

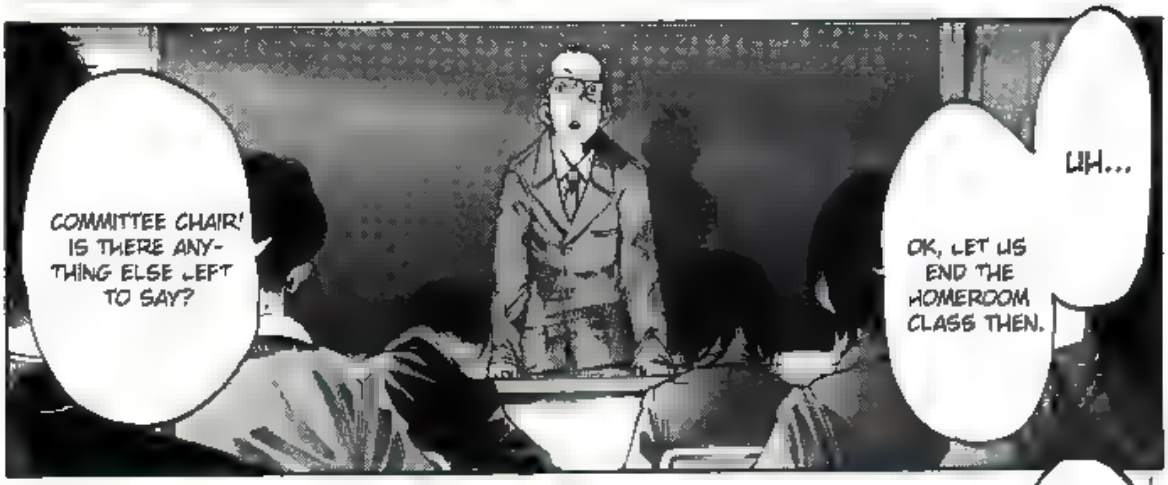

AND THE LETTER ALWAYS ENDED THE SAME WAY.
THE CONTENTS OF THE LETTER WAS ALWAYS A NONSENSE STORY ABOUT SPACE AND AN ARMY OF GIANTS

THE WINTER NIGHT SKY WAS EVER SO CLEAR, AND ITS STILLNESS CREEPED IN HIS EARS.
EVEN THOUGH PUNPUN DID NOT YET APPRECIATE THE BITTER TASTE OF COFFEE,
HE COULD SLOWLY FEEL HIS SELF,
GROWING BLACKER.

SCANLATED BY HOX



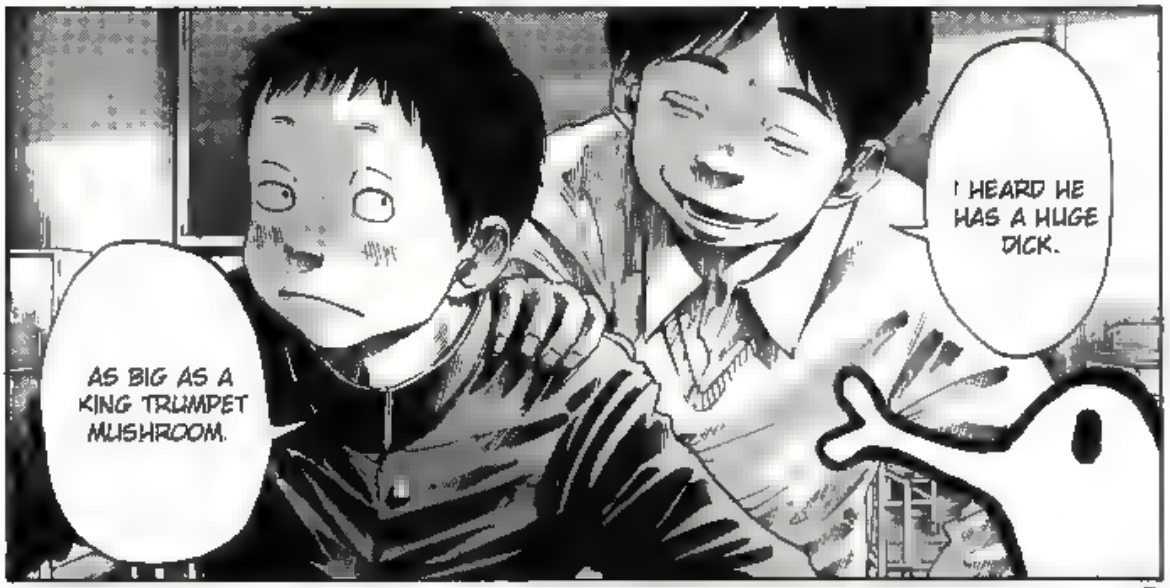



COMMITTEE CHAIR! IS THERE ANY-THING ELSE LEFT TO SAY?
UH...
OK, LET US END THE HOMEROOM CLASS THEN.

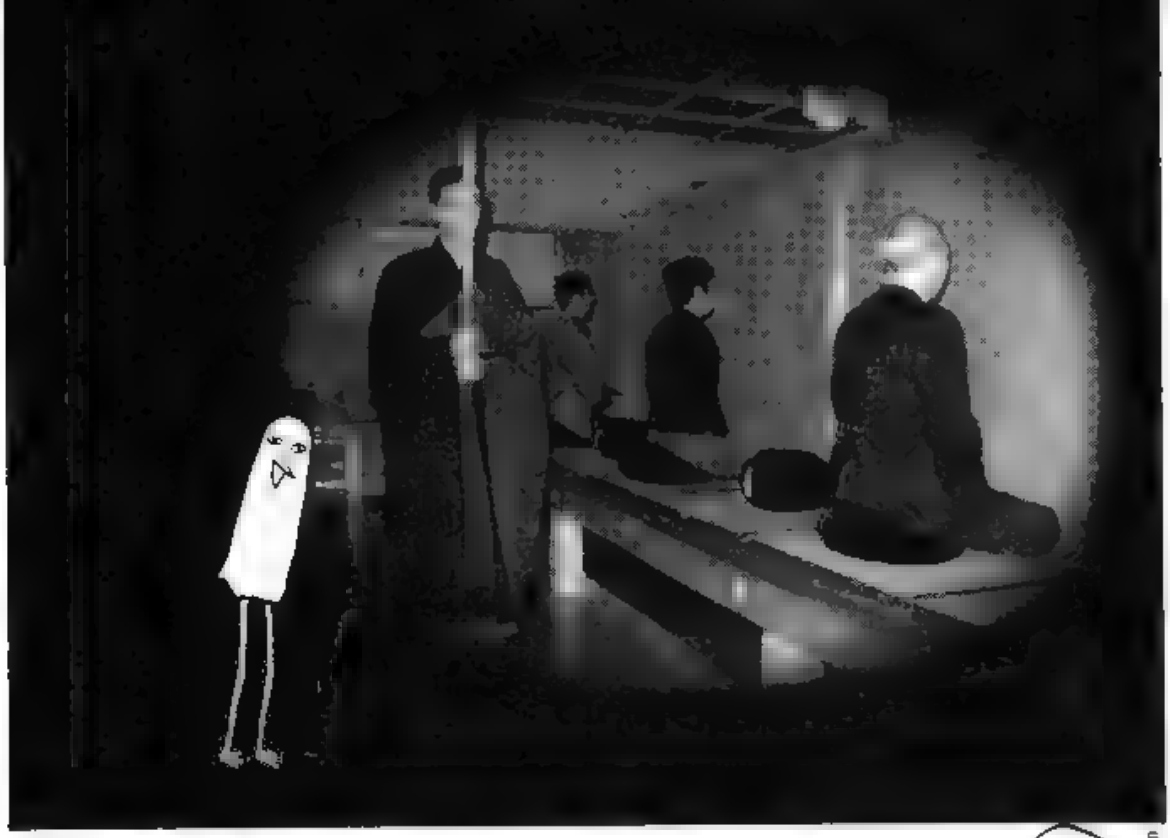
NOTHING IN PARTICULAR!
..OK!
PLEASE TAKE CARE RETURNING HOME, PEOPLE.
THANKS FOR THE HARD WORK, EVERYONE.

UGH. .
SO COLD ..!
MAYBE I SHOULD HAVE GONE TO A PRIVATE SCHOOL INSTEAD .
AND YOU NEED TO HURRY UP AND DECIDE ON SOMETHING!
YOU WERE THE ONE WHO SAID WE SHOULD ALL DO SOMETHING AS A GROUP OVER THE SUMMER BREAK, WEREN'T YOU!?
2
HAVE TO GET GOING TO MY CLUB SOON. IS TOMORROW NO GOOD?
JEEZ ..!!
TOKYOPUNCH

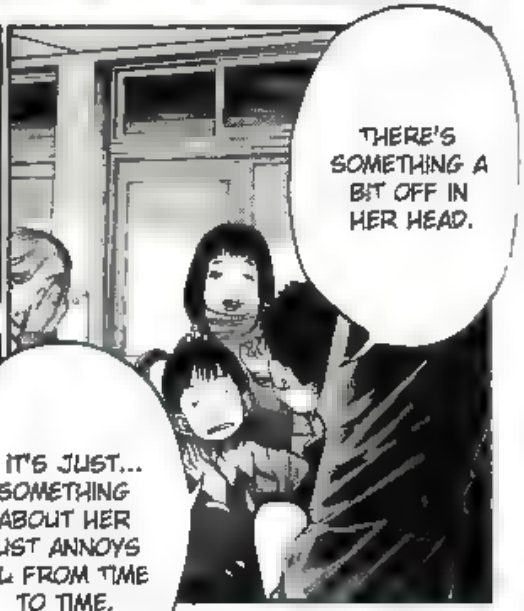
YOU LIKE BADMINTON THAT MUCH, KOMATSU?
WHEN DID YOU TURN INTO SUCH A SPORTS FREAK? AND GIVE ME THAT!
HUH?
YAGUCHI?
AAH... HE DOES SEEM TO BE SONO'S TYPE...


I HEARD HE HAS A HUGE DICK.
AS BIG AS A KING TRUMPET MUSHROOM.

HEY IDIOT, ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME!?
I DON'T LIKE,
THOSE KINDS OF GUYS WHO ARE NEVER SERIOUS
BUT YOU KNOW, HE DOES HAVE A LOT OF 1ST YEAR GIRLS AS HIS FANS.
SOME YOUNGER GIRL MIGHT JUST STEAL HIM AWAY...
4
. .AH.
BUT ISN'T YAGUCHI,
CURRENTLY DATING TANAKA AI?

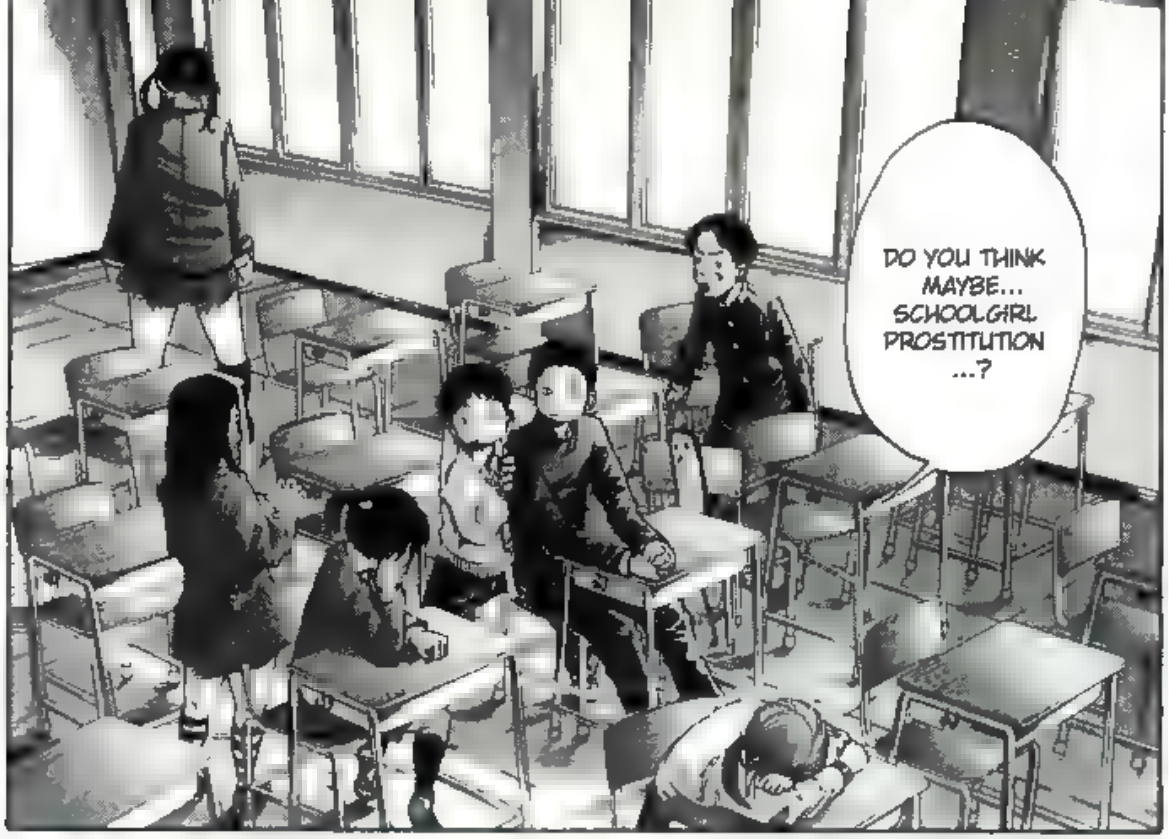


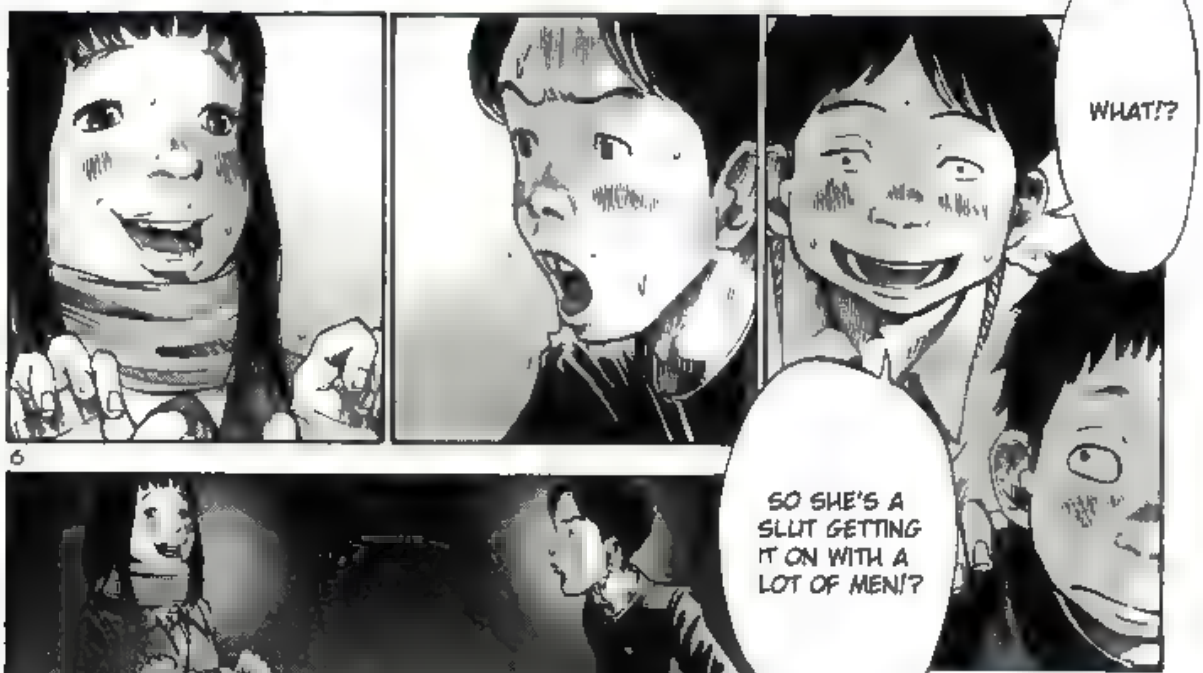
I USED TO PLAY WITH HER BACK IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BUT...
HMM...
THAT GIRL...


THERE'S SOMETHING A BIT OFF IN HER HEAD.

DOESN'T SHE ALWAYS LEAVE EARLY AS SOON AS SCHOOL'S OVER?

IT'S JUST... SOMETHING ABOUT HER JUST ANNOYS YOU FROM TIME TO TIME.


DO YOU THINK MAYBE... SCHOOLGIRL PROSTITUTION ...?

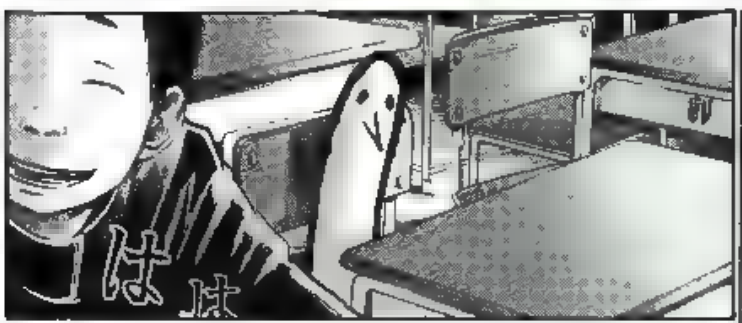

WHAT!?
SO SHE'S A SLUT GETTING IT ON WITH A LOT OF MEN!?

6

WELL, TO BE HONEST, I DON'T REALLY WANT TO GET INVOLVED...
BUT SHE IS A PART OF THAT REALLY SKETCHY CULT, ISN'T SHE?
ONE OF THEIR MEMBERS TRIED TO SELL MY MOM SOME REALLY WEIRD WATER.
DAMN...
SEEMS LIKE THE WORST KIND OF GIRL, THAT TANAKA AI.

"SEEMS LIKE THE WORST KIND OF GIRL, THAT TANAKA A."

HA
SHE IS,
ISN'T SHE!?
HA
HA
HA
HA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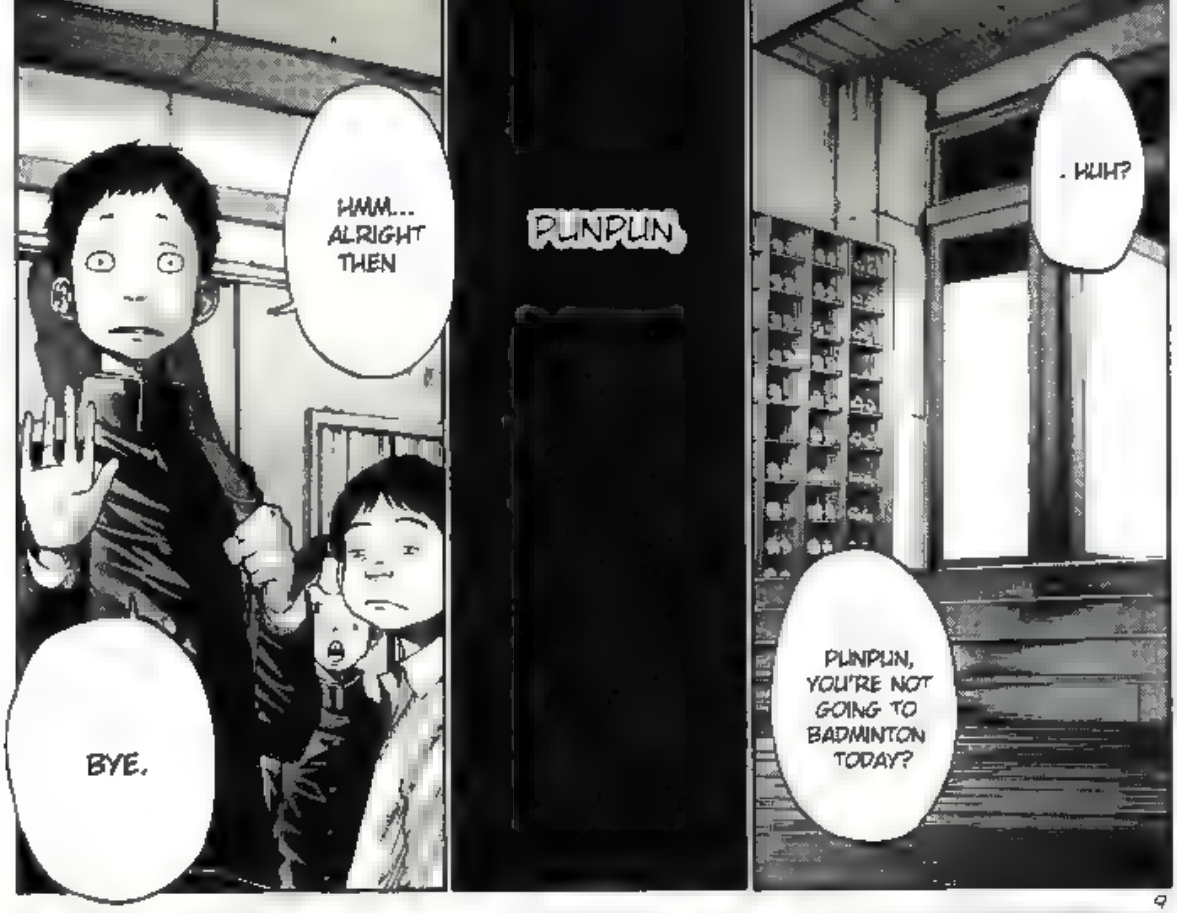
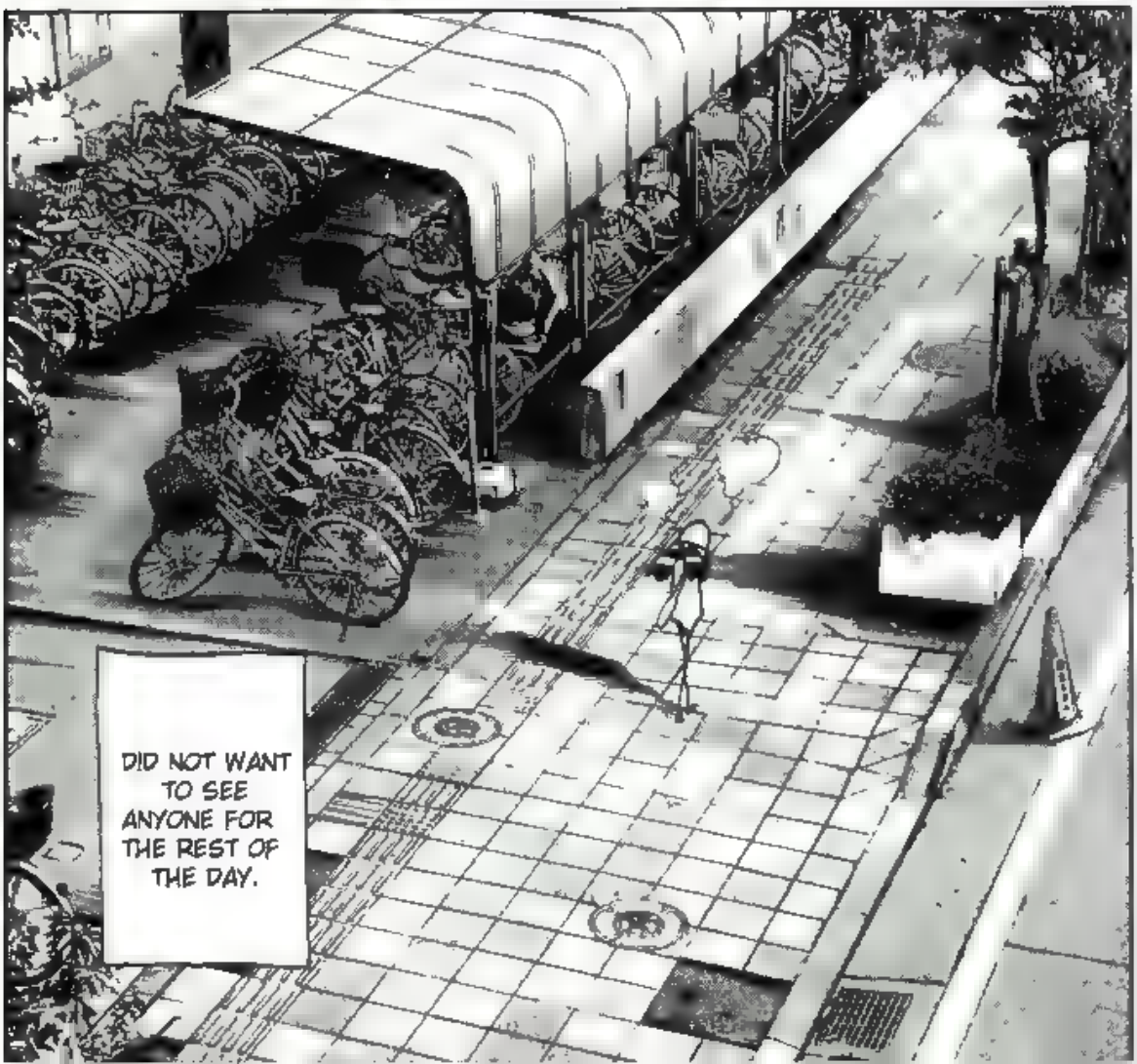
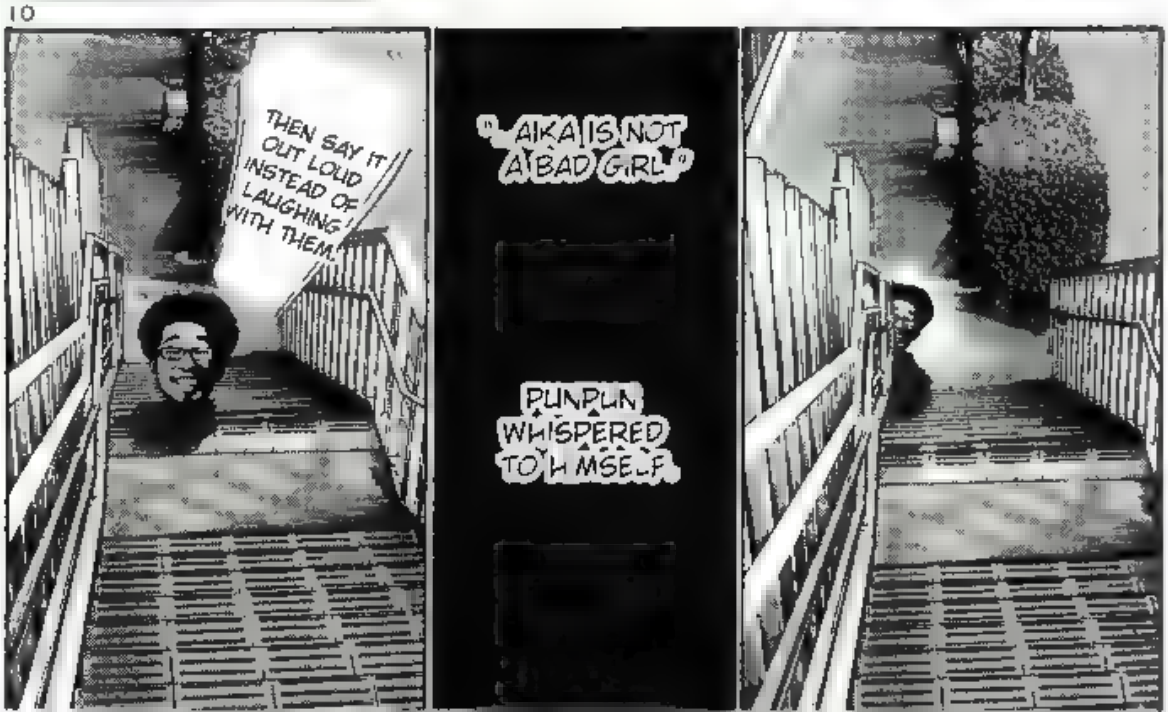
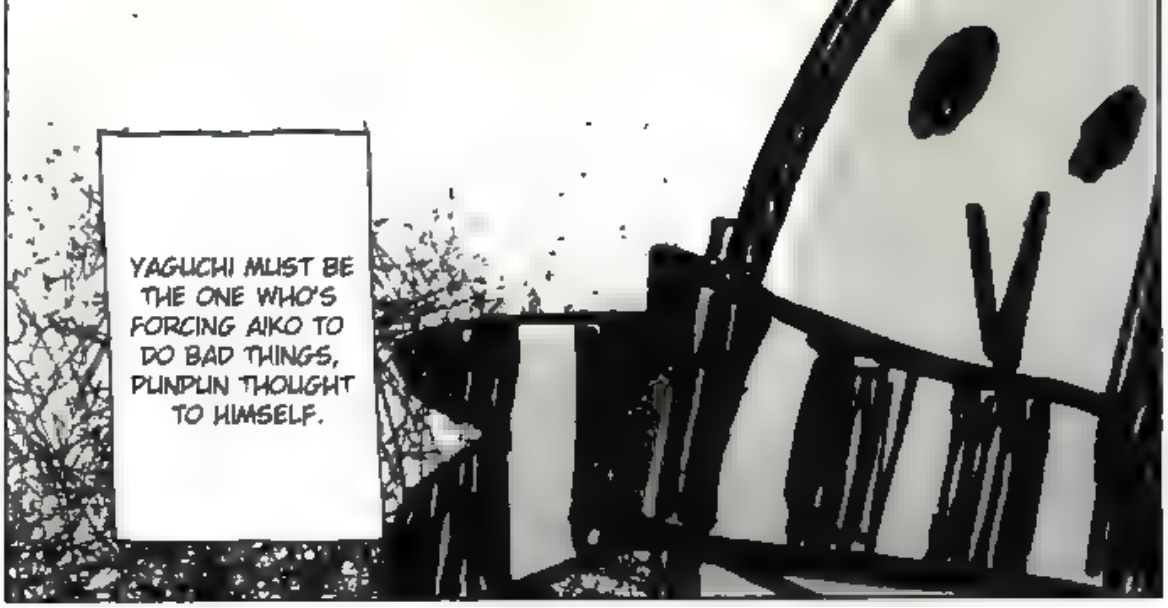
HA
HA
HA.


HMM... ALRIGHT THEN
BYE.
PUNPUN
PUNPUN, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BADMINTON TODAY?
. HUH?


DID NOT WANT TO SEE ANYONE FOR THE REST OF THE DAY.

COWARD.


THEN SAY IT OUT LOUD INSTEAD OF LAUGHING WITH THEM.
"AIKA IS NOT A BAD GIRL"
PUNPUN WHISPERED TO HIMSELF

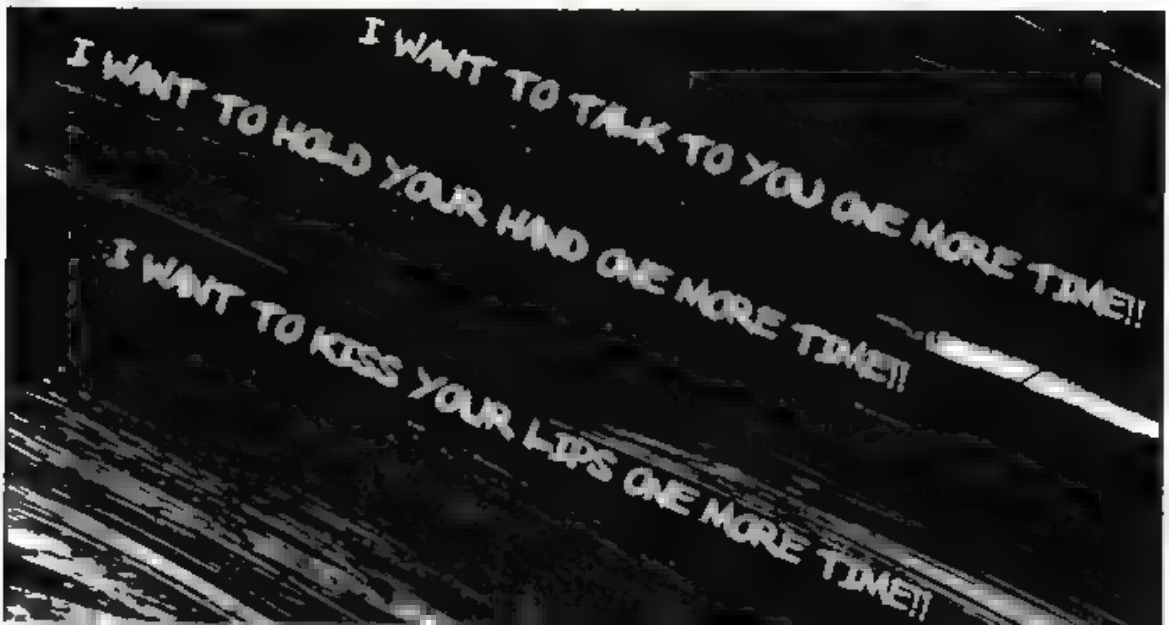

YAGUCHI MUST BE THE ONE WHO'S FORCING AIKO TO DO BAD THINGS, PUNPUN THOUGHT TO HIMSELF.

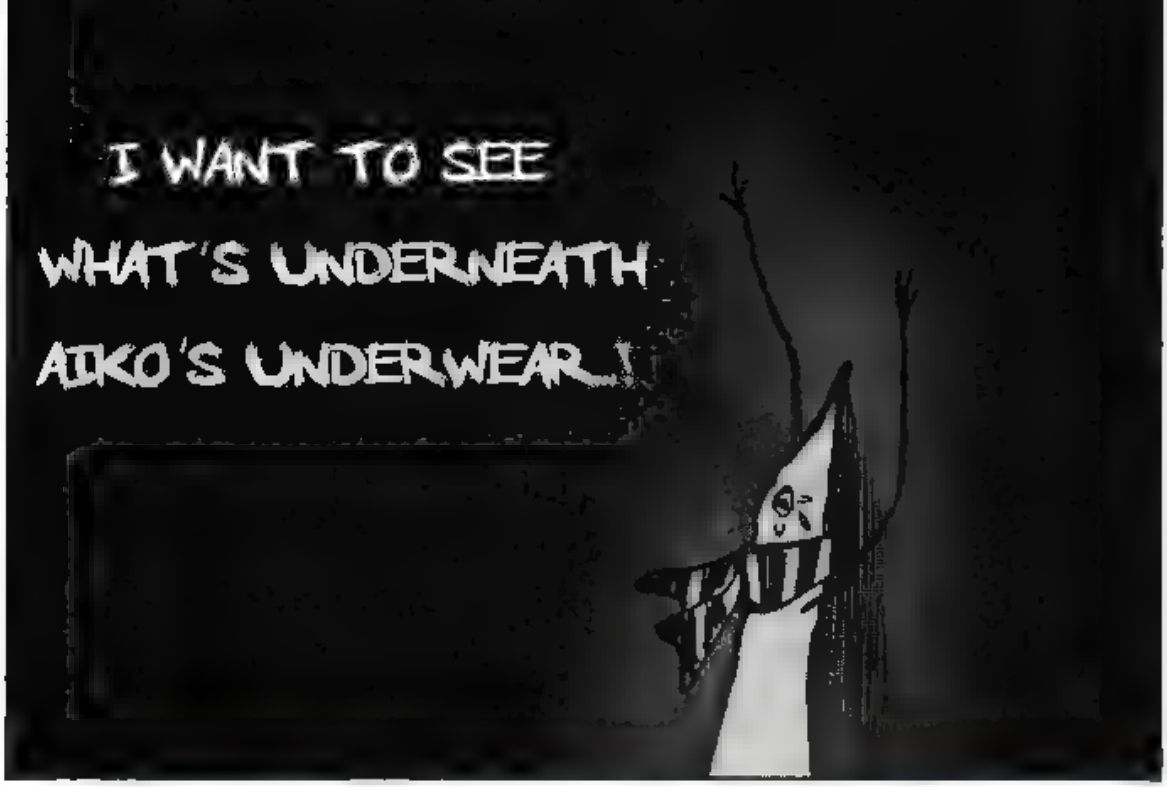
ALRIGHT, I GOT IT!! JUST KILL HIM!!

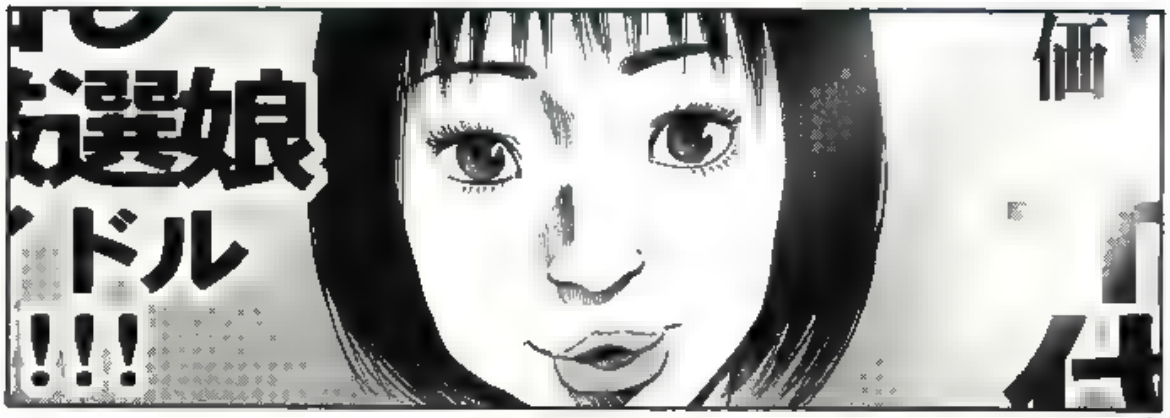
AS PUNPUN FELT THE BLACKNESS CREEPING INTO HIS EMOTIONS,

FADING FAR FAR AWAY INTO THE LIGHT...
HE FELT HIS MEMORIES OF AIKO, HER EXPRESSIONS, HER FEELINGS,

AIKoooo!!
!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!


I WANT TO TALK TO YOU ONE MORE TIME!!
I WANT TO HOLD YOUR HAND ONE MORE TIME!!
I WANT TO KISS YOUR LIPS ONE MORE TIME!!


I WANT TO SEE
WHAT'S UNDERNEATH
AIKO'S UNDERWEAR...!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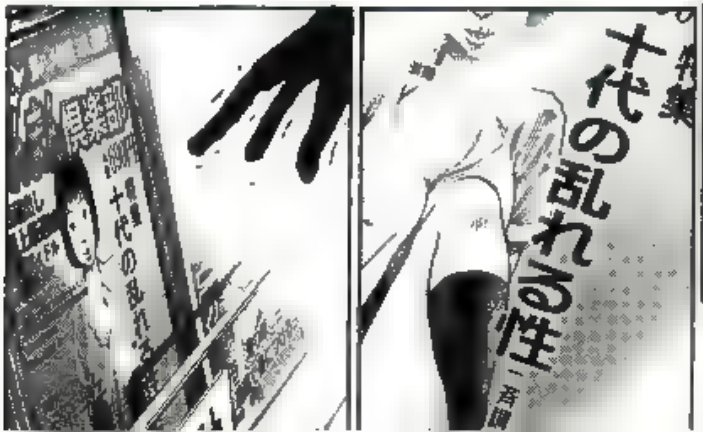
690円
特集
十代の乱れる性
ADULT MAGAZINES

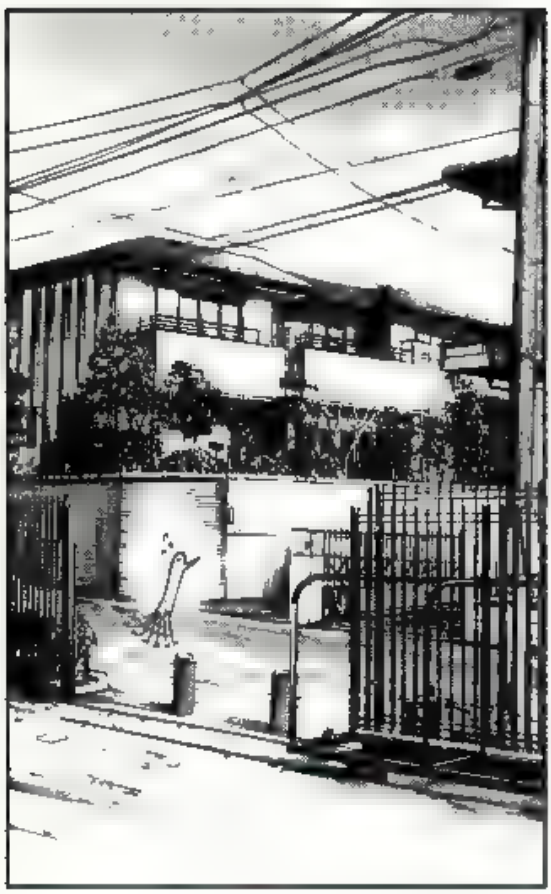

特集
十代の乱れる性

HEY!!
WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?
YOU SKIPPED TODAY'S PRACTICE DIDN'T YOU?
WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?

14

上原書店

KILL HIM!!



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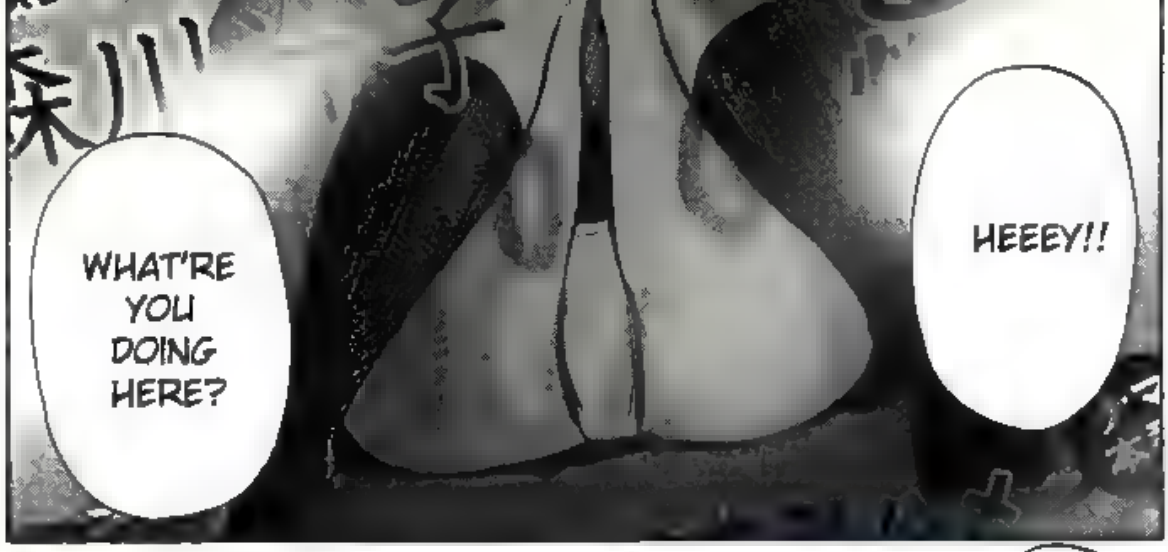
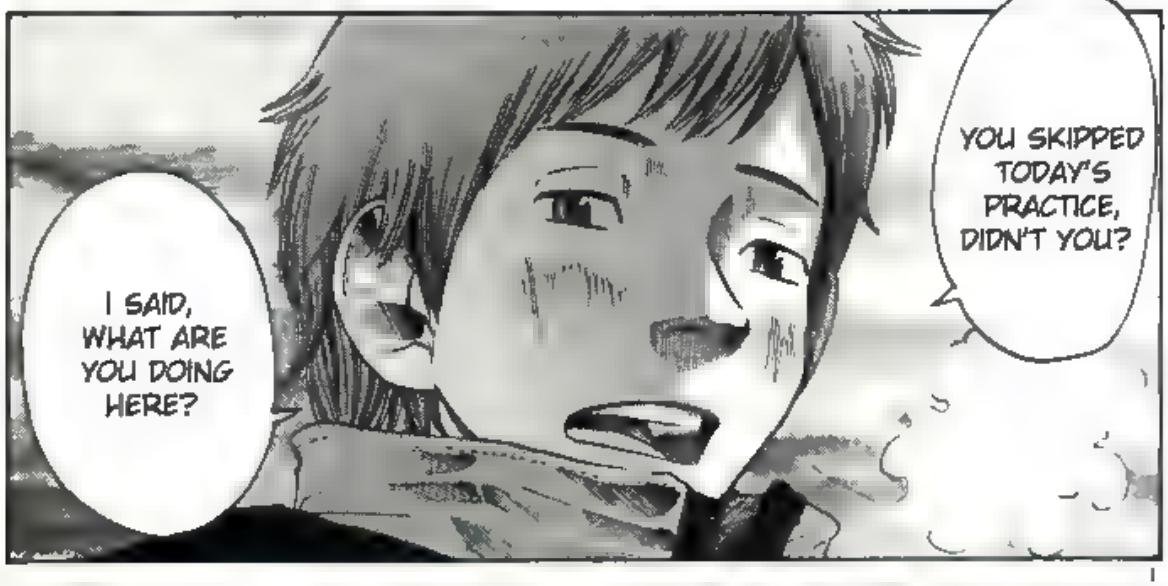
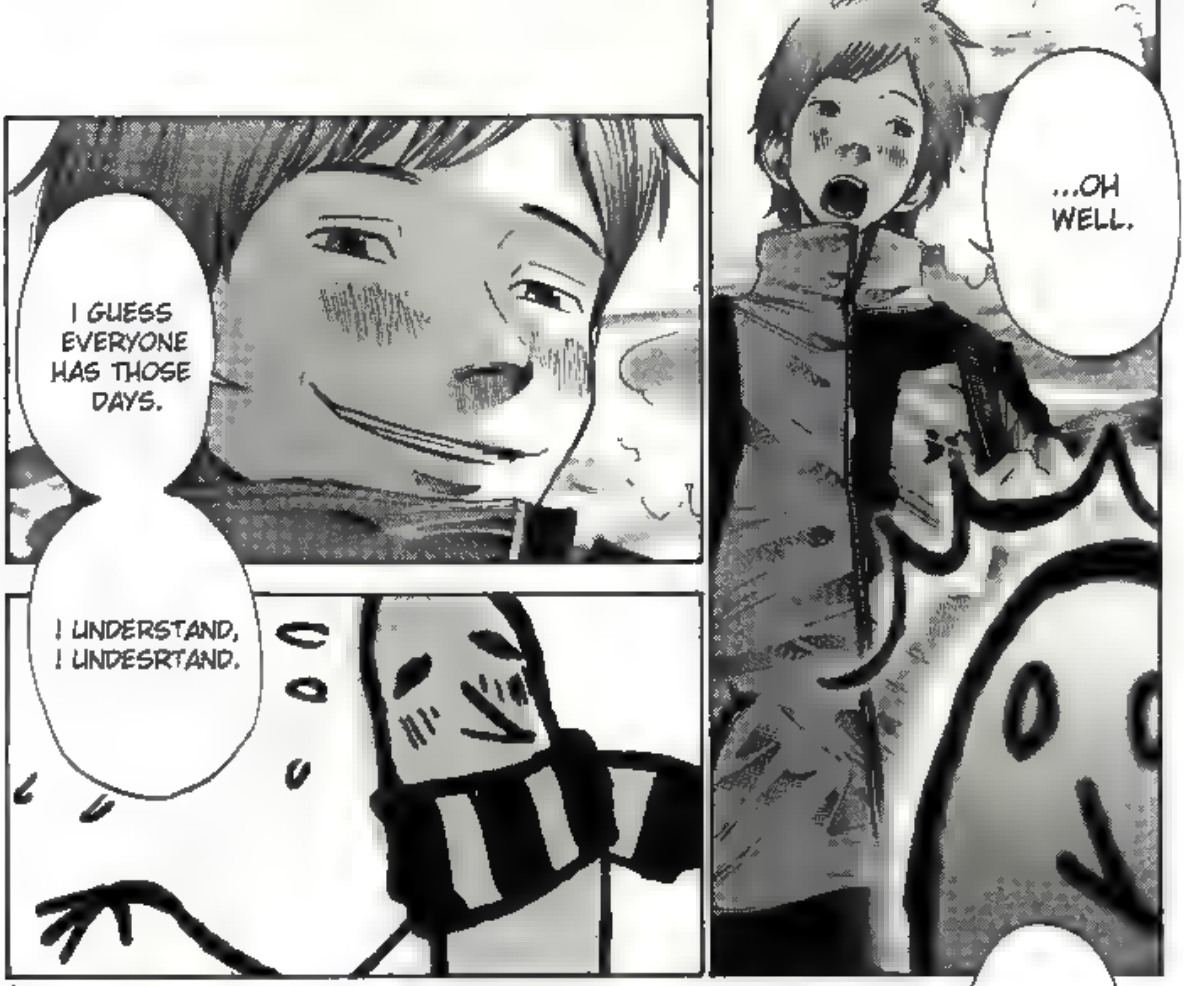

WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?
HEEEY!!


I SAID, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
YOU SKIPPED TODAY'S PRACTICE, DIDN'T YOU?

KILL HIM!!


...OH WELL.
I GUESS EVERYONE HAS THOSE DAYS.
I UNDERSTAND, I UNDESRTAND.

2

UM....YOUR NAME WAS ....
...OZAWA? NO, ODASHIMA? NO...
ONODERA!
SORRY BUT YOU'RE JUST NOT THE MOST NOTICEABLE GUY, YOU KNOW!?
上原書店

SO WHY DON'T WE GO TOGETHER?
I CAN WAIT FOR YOU IF YOU WERE GOING TO BUY A BOOK.
YOU GO HOME THIS WAY?
BECAUSE IT'S THE SAME FOR ME TOO.

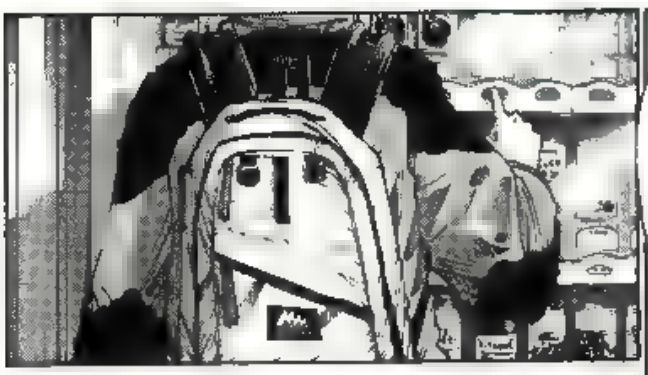
NO NEED TO HURRY, ALRIGHT?

I'M USELESS WHEN IT COMES TO STUDYING. GUESS IT'S BECAUSE I'VE BEEN DOING NOTHING BUT BADMINTON SINCE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.
BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
BUYING SUCH A DIFFICULT BOOK LIKE THAT...
YOU MUST BE PRETTY SMART...

BECAUSE THIS BOY MUST BE FORCING AIKO TO DO BAD THINGS...
IF I CAN'T GET A RECOMMENDATION LETTER WITH MY ATHLETIC ABILITIES, THAN I'M IN SERIOUS TROUBLE
...I HAVE TO WIN AT THE NEXT PREFECTURAL TOURNAMENT NO MATTER WHAT
PUNPUN MANAGED TO BARELY PULL HIMSELF OUT OF THAT MESS WITH A COOL, COMPOSED IDEA BUT HE COULDN'T RELAX JUST YET
THAT DOESN'T MATTER, JUST DO IT!!
AH!!
OH NO, WATCH OUT!!

SAVED BY A HAIR'S BREADTH!!
HE WAS ABOUT TO STAB PUNPUN WITH A SHARP DAGGER AS HE TURNED AROUND!!

GOOD INSTINCTS, PUNPUN!!



HEY,
YOU WANT SOMETHING TO DRINK?

NOW!

SHOOT!!

6

HERE!
IT'S REALLY COLD TODAY.
SO DRINK UP.
HIS EYEBALL! AIM FOR THE EYES!!
LOOKS LIKE THE 1ST YEARS WON'T BE ABLE TO PRACTICE THEIR PRACTICE SWINGS OUTSIDE SOON.

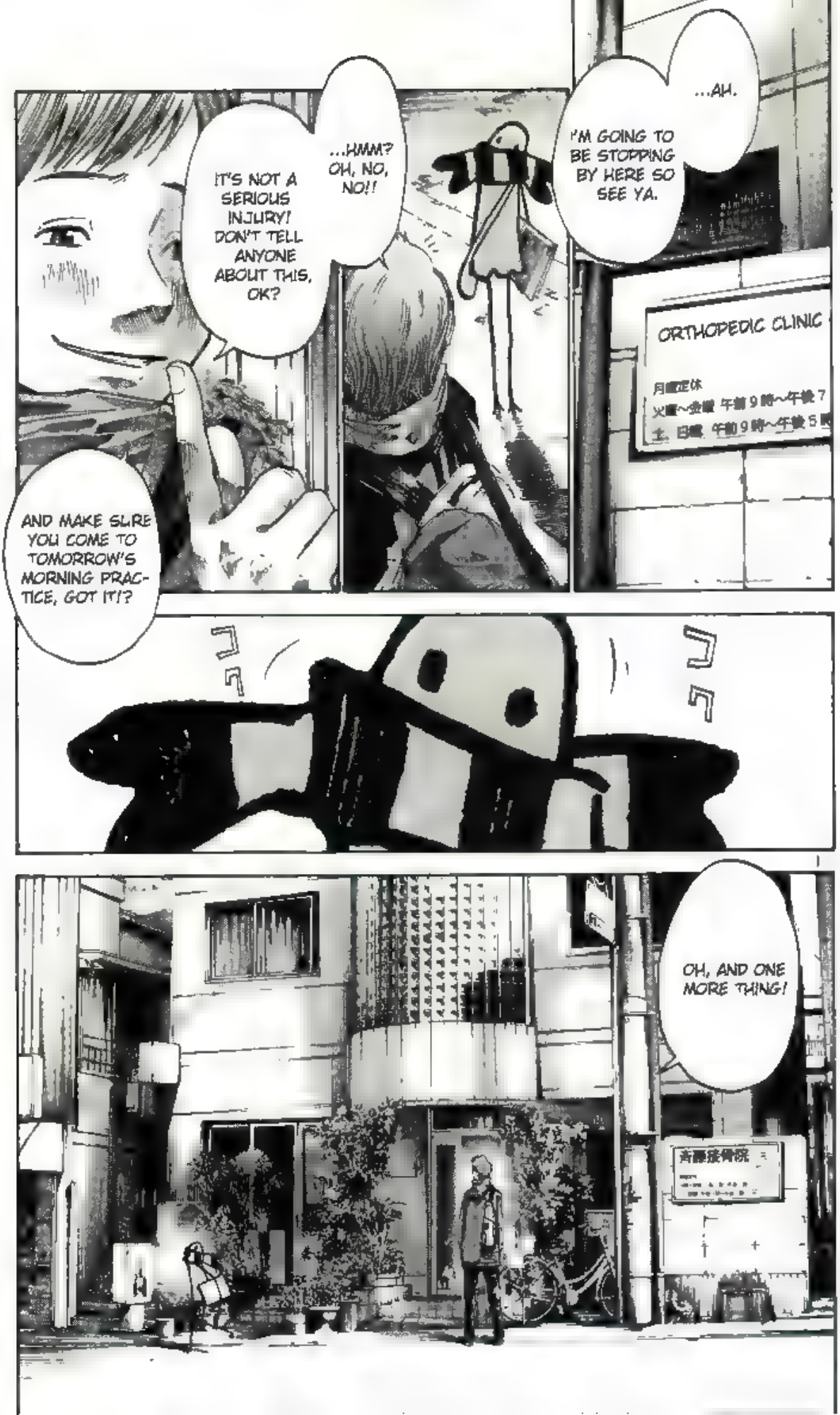
GOD, EVERYTHING'S SO BORING AND TIRESOME.
THE CLUB LEADER, ADVISOR, SECRETARY. THEY'RE ALL SO OBSTINATE
I'M BEING A LITTLE HARSH WHEN I SAY THIS, BUT THEY'RE TOO WEAK AND CAN'T CONVINCE ANYONE.
EVEN THE 2ND YEARS ARE ALL PROBABLY BETTER THAN THEM IN TERMS OF BADMINTON SKILLS.
...MAN, BUT YOU KNOW,
B
THAT 1ST YEAR KOMATSU IS AMAZING
HE'S THE KIND OF GUY WHERE IF YOU TEACH HIM ONE THING, HE CAN DO 10 OR 20 THINGS.
HE'S A GENIUS.
I SOMETIMES THINK THAT ALL MY HARD WORK AND EFFORTS ARE MEANINGLESS WHEN COMPARED TO HIS INNATE TALENT...

AS LONG AS I COULD BECOME THE ALL JAPAN JUNIORS CHAMPION, I WOULDN'T MIND GIVING MY ALL IN LIFE.
I THOUGHT...
TO BE HONEST, I SOMETIMES WONDER,
JUST WHAT I'VE BEEN WORKING SO HARD FOR

JUST ANOTHER MEDIOCRE PERSON.
BUT IN THE END, I'M NO GENIUS,

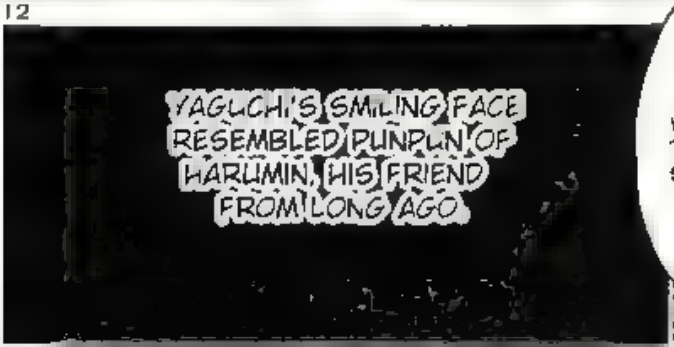
UGH, WHATEVER!!
LET'S TALK ABOUT SOMETHING LESS DEPRESSING!
AVERAGE PEOPLE LIKE ME ARE BETTER OFF HAVING SMALLER DREAMS. .
I GUESS ...

HMM...
YOU GOT ANYONE YOU LIKE?
I...
RECENTLY GOT A GIRLFRIEND FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT I SHOULD TALK ABOUT WITH HER AND I GET SO DAMN NERVOUS JUST HOLDING HER HAND!
LATELY, I CAN'T GET HER OUT OF MY MIND.
WITH MY MIND LIKE THIS, NO WONDER WHY CAN'T BEAT KOMATSU...
GAH, I'M SORRY!!
I ENDED UP TALKING ABOUT ANOTHER DEPRESSING THING. WHAT THE HELL'S WRONG WITH ME!?


...AH.
I'M GOING TO BE STOPPING BY HERE SO SEE YA.
ORTHOPEDIC CLINIC
...HMM? OH, NO, NO!!
IT'S NOT A SERIOUS INJURY! DON'T TELL ANYONE ABOUT THIS, OK?
AND MAKE SURE YOU COME TO TOMORROW'S MORNING PRACTICE, GOT IT!?
OH, AND ONE MORE THING!

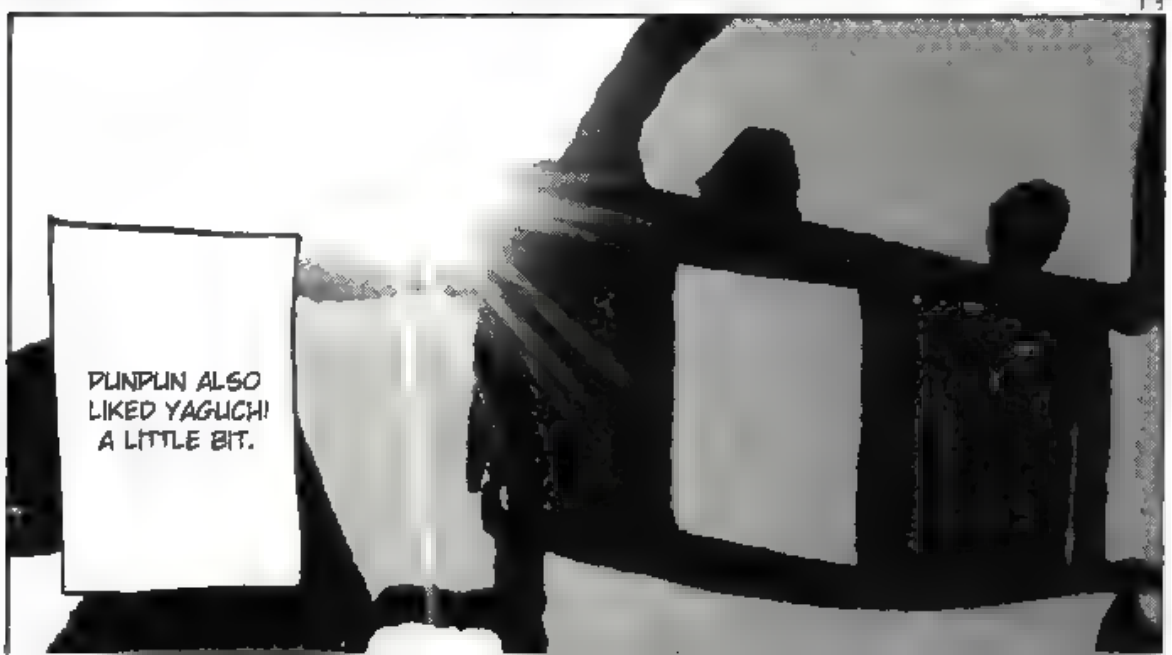
IF MY GREATEST JOY IN LIFE IS MAKING MY GIRLFRIEND HAPPY?
DO YOU THINK IT'S A BIT NARROW-MINDED OF ME AS A PERSON,

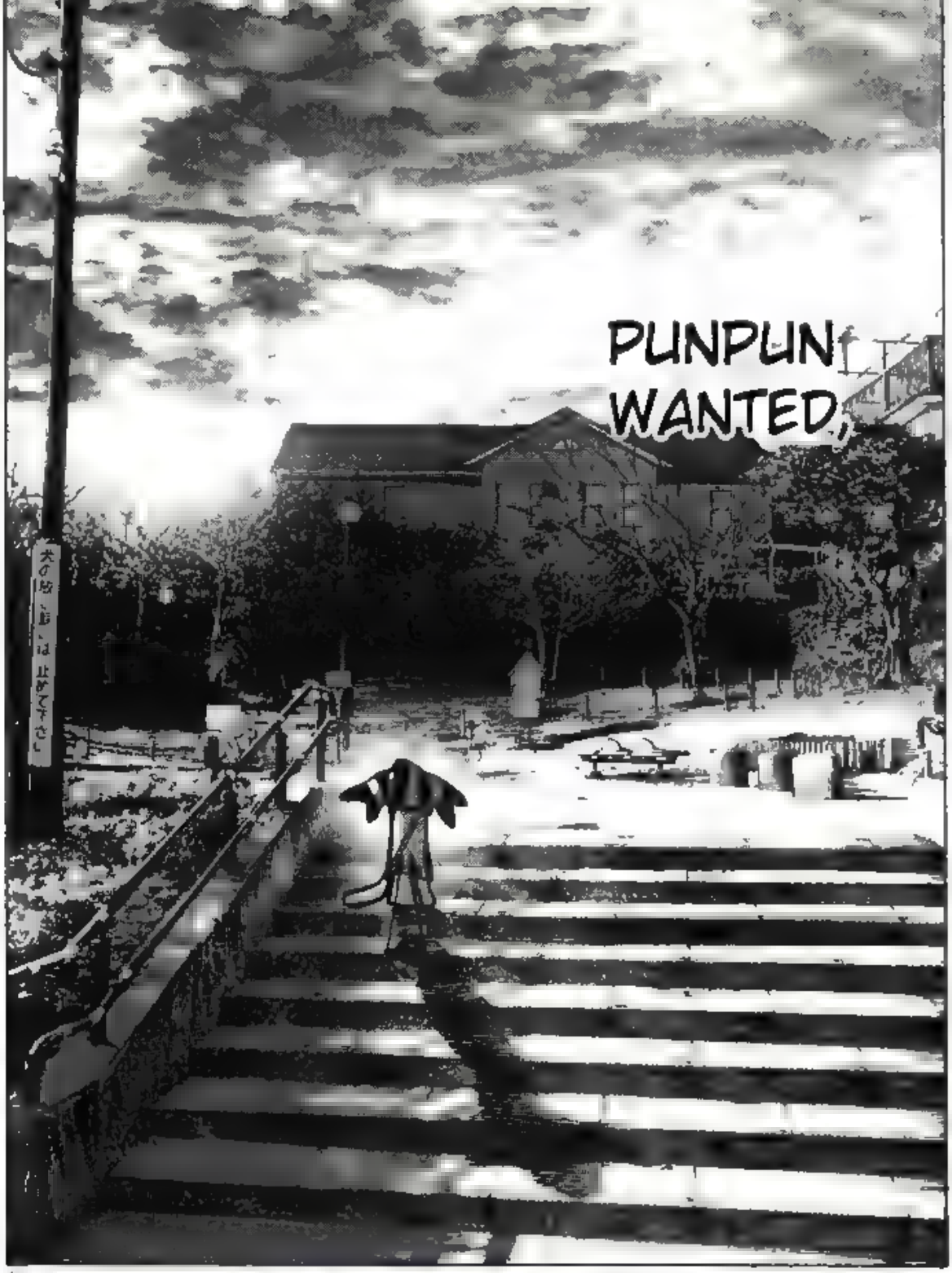
SORRY. I ONLY FELT LIKE SAYING IT SINCE YOU'RE SUCH A GOOD LISTENER.
WE SHOULD TALK MORE SOMETIMES!


YAGUCHI'S SMILING FACE RESEMBLED PUNPUN OF HARUMIN, HIS FRIEND FROM LONG AGO.

THE GIRLFRIEND THAT HE TALKED ABOUT WAS AIKO WITHOUT A DOUBT
EVEN SO, PUNPUN STILL LIKED AIKO.

YET AT THE SAME TIME,


PUNPUN ALSO LIKED YAGUCHI A LITTLE BIT.


PUNPUN WANTED.

BUT THEN, WHO WOULD BE THERE TO ACCEPT HIS FEELINGS OF LOVE...?
FOR YAGUCHI TO FIND EVEN THE TINIEST BIT OF HAPPINESS.

5

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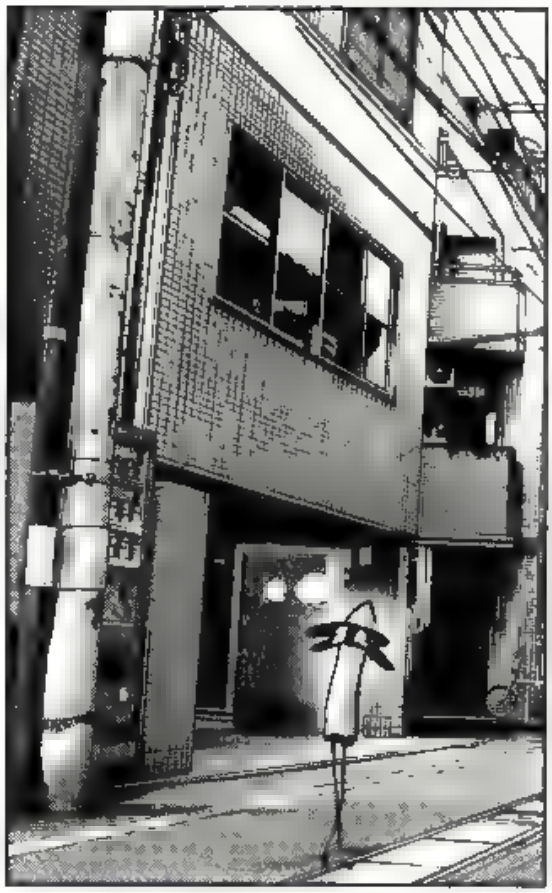
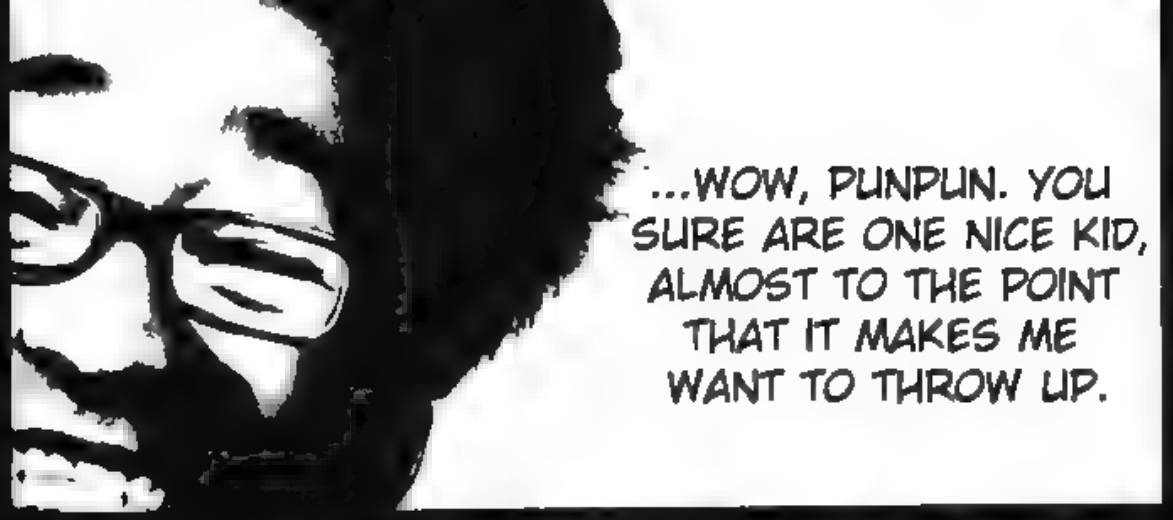
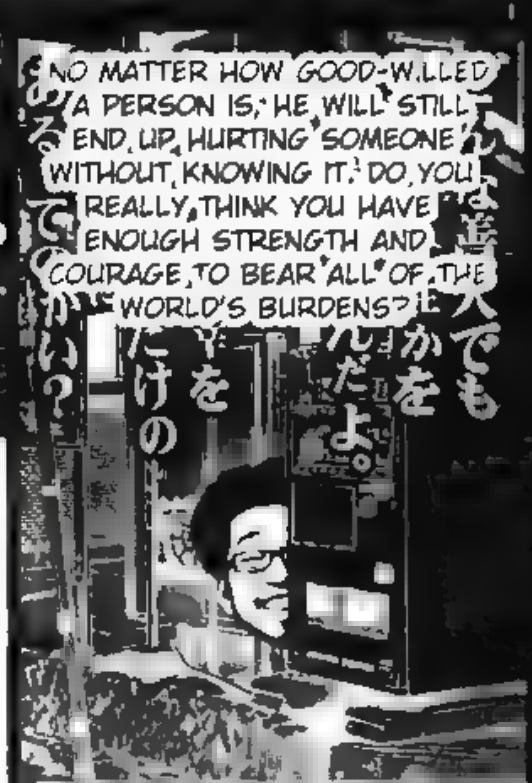
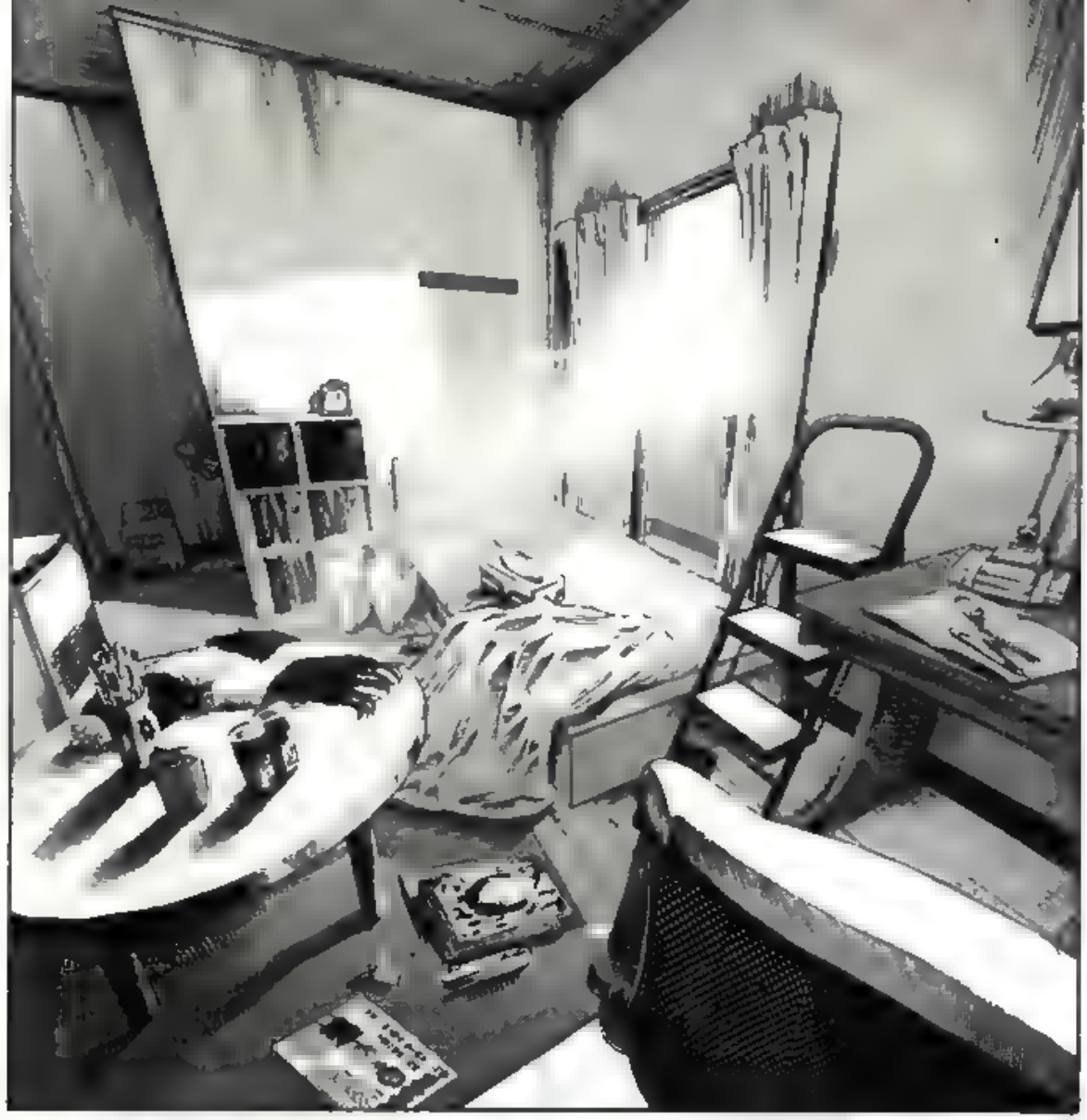




他人の成り立ちだ
ONE PERSON'S HAPPINESS COMES FROM ANOTHER'S MISFORTUNE, DON'T YOU KNOW?
YOU THINK EVERYBODY CAN BE HAPPY ON THIS EARTH?
みんな幸せになれると思うのかい


NO MATTER HOW GOOD-WILLED A PERSON IS, HE WILL STILL END UP HURTING SOMEONE WITHOUT KNOWING IT. DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU HAVE ENOUGH STRENGTH AND COURAGE TO BEAR ALL OF THE WORLD'S BURDENS?
人でもかを
をけの
だよ。
かい?

IT'S TO KILL THEM FIRST BEFORE THEY GET YOU.



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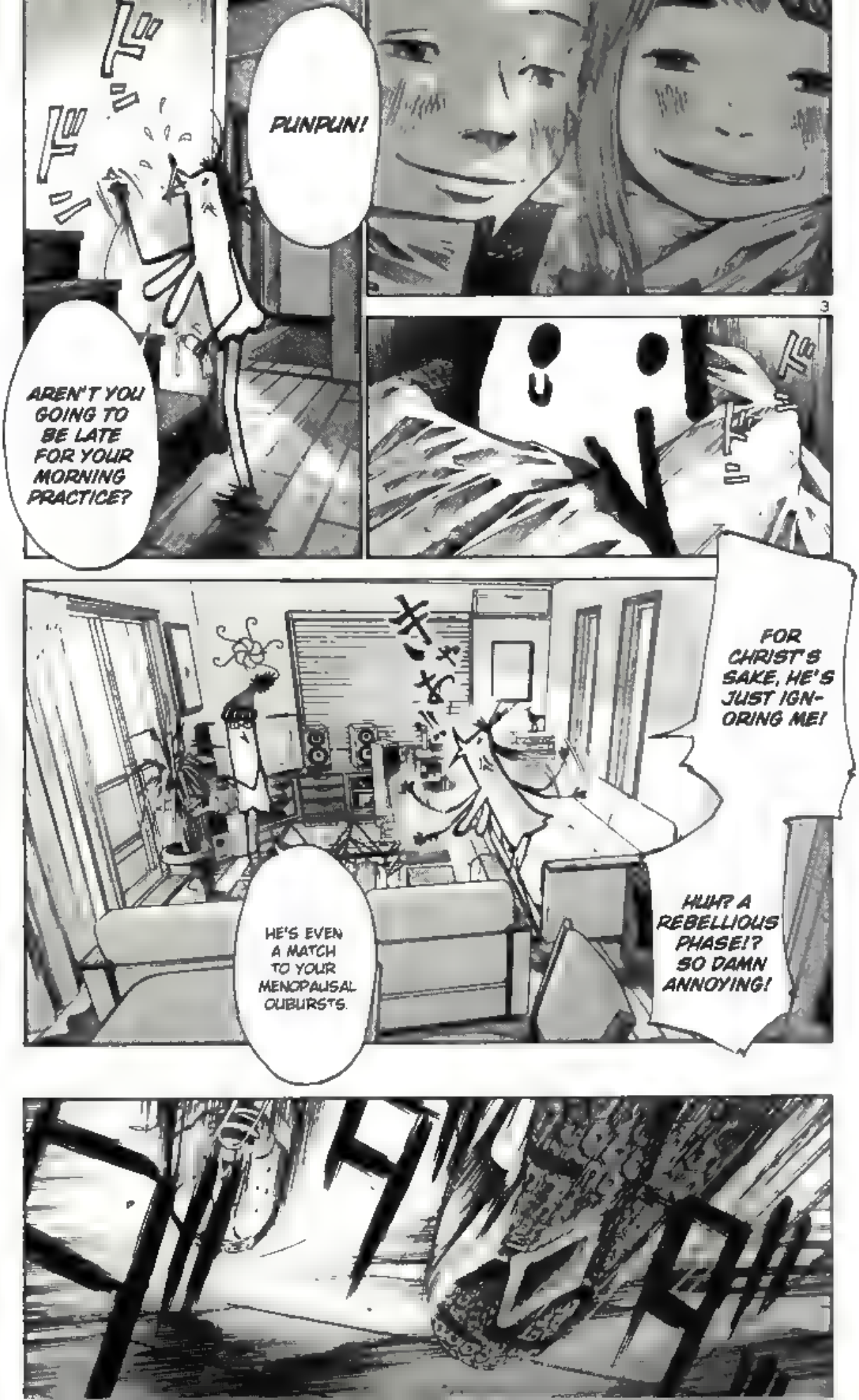
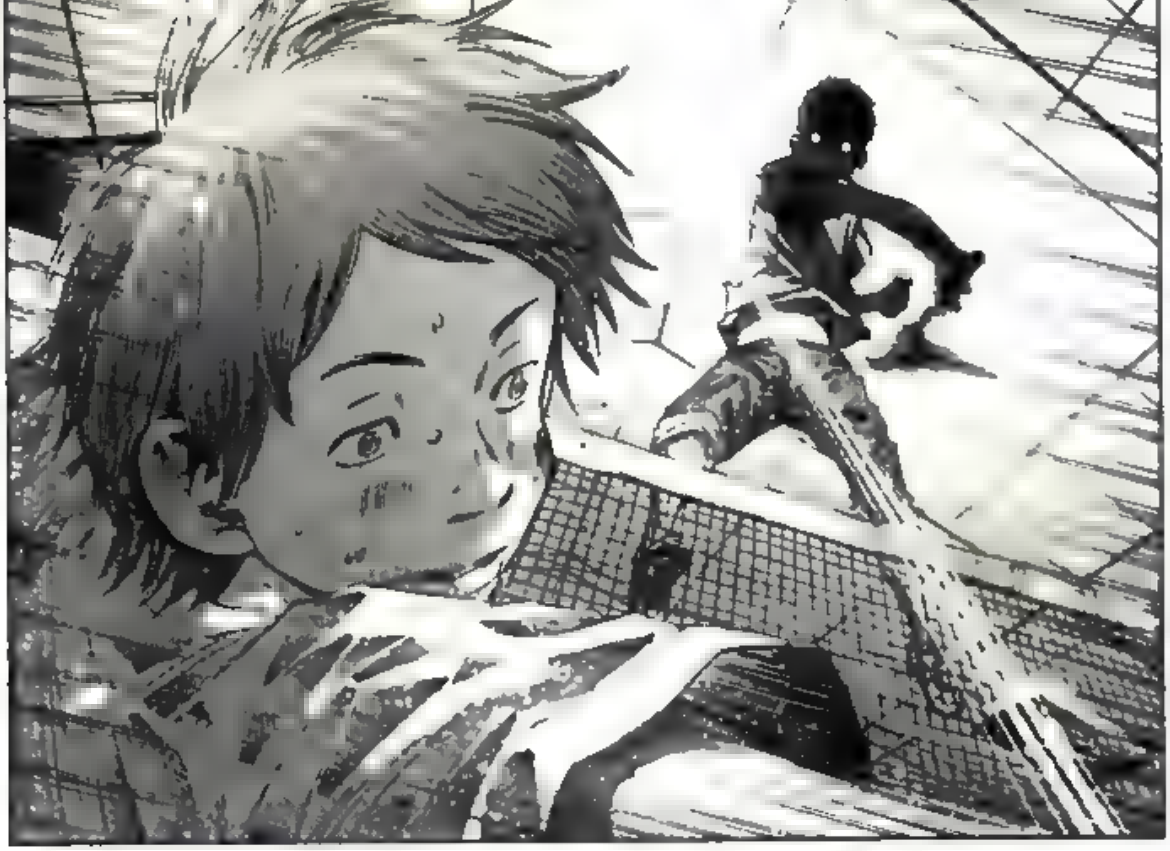
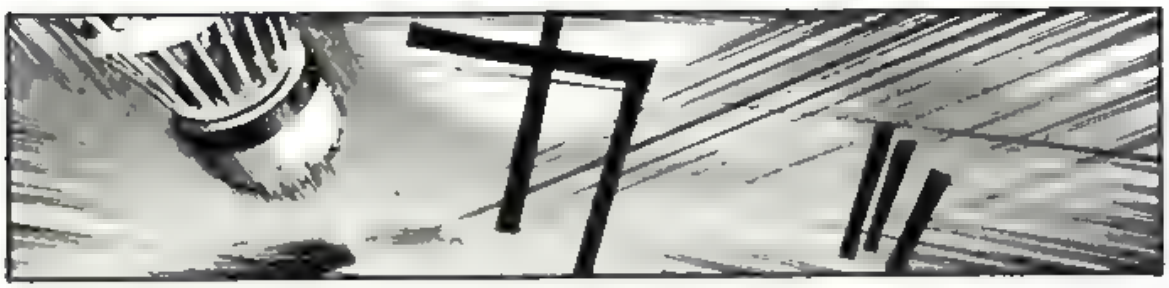

PUNPUN!
AREN'T YOU GOING TO BE LATE FOR YOUR MORNING PRACTICE?
3
FOR CHRIST'S SAKE, HE'S JUST IGNORING ME!
HE'S EVEN A MATCH TO YOUR MENOPAUSAL OUBURSTS.
HUH? A REBELLIOUS PHASE!? SO DAMN ANNOYING!





I THOUGHT I WAS FINALLY GOING TO PLAY IN THE GYMNA-SIUM BUT I JUST GET STUCK ON SCOREKEEPING DUTY
GOD, THEY'VE BEEN AT IT ALL MORNING LONG!
13
10
7

PLEASE TAKE THIS A LITTLE MORE SERI-OUSLY.
YAGUCHI,

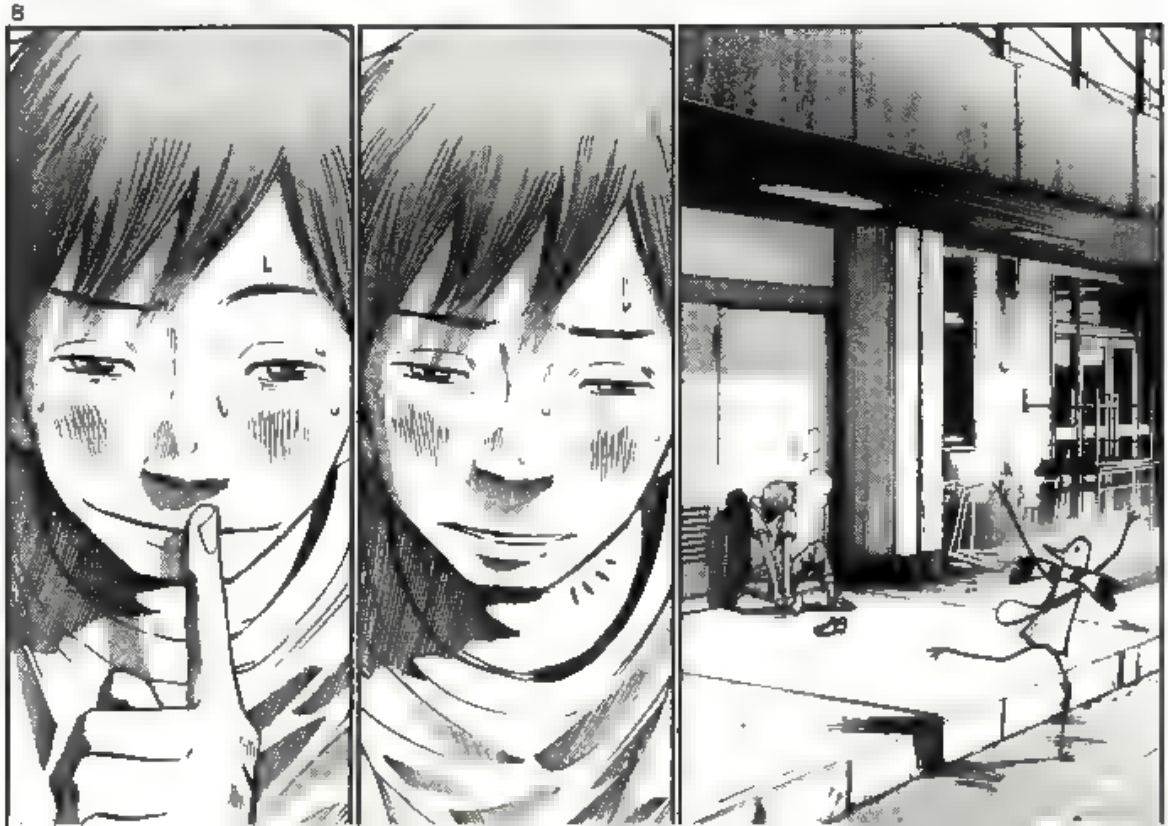
AHAHAHA!!
...AHA,

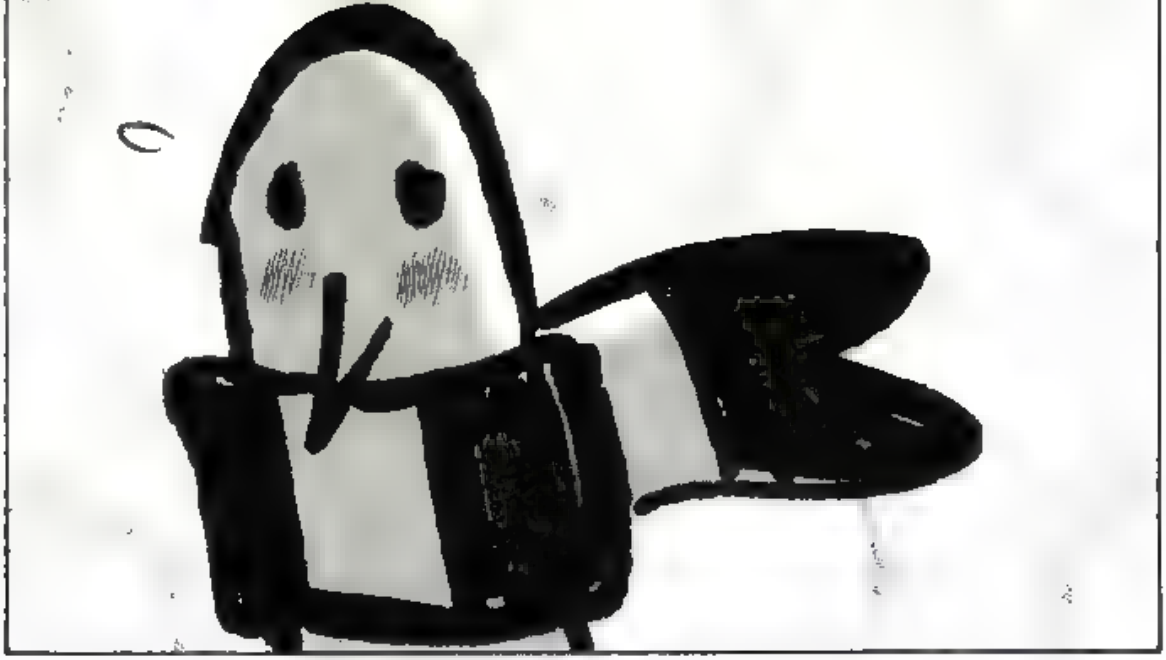
TEACHER,
CAN I GET A QUICK BREAK?

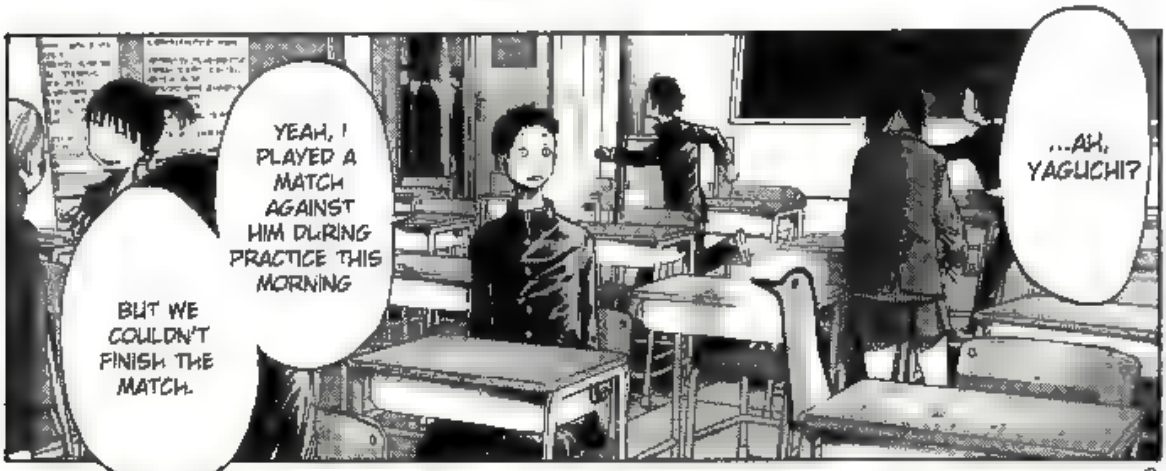
MY BAD, MY BAD!!
I'VE BEEN NEEDING TO GO TO THE WASHROOM PRETTY BADLY FOR AWHILE NOW!!

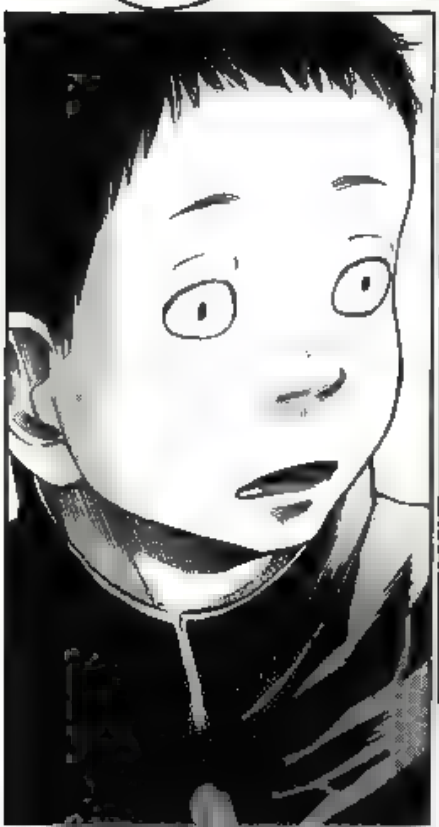
WINNING THAT PREFECTURAL TOURNAMENT IS GOING TO BE IMPOSSIBLE
EVEN IF HE WERE TO ADVANCE TO THE FINALS, HE'LL PROBABLY END UP LOSING TO KOMATSU.
MAN, IT LOOKS LIKE YAGUCHI'S BEEN GETTING WORSE LATELY ..
HE USED TO BE THE BEST IN THIS CITY BUT NOW HE CAN'T EVEN WIN AGAINST KOMATSU.

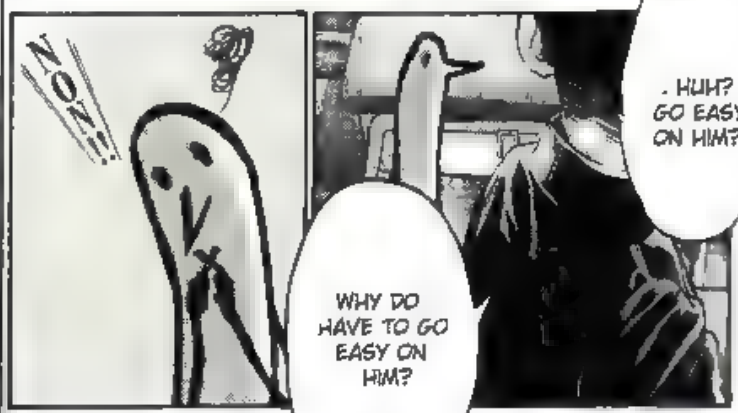
I KIND OF FEEL SORRY FOR HIM.



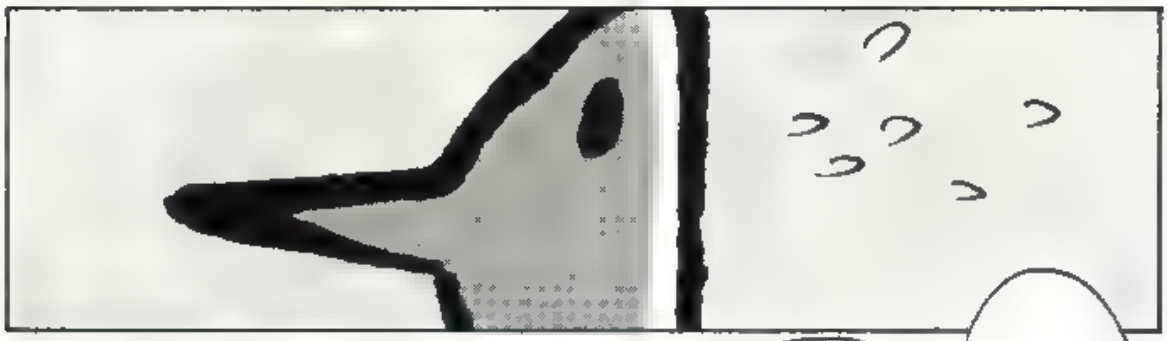



...AH, YAGUCHI?
YEAH, I PLAYED A MATCH AGAINST HIM DURING PRACTICE THIS MORNING
BUT WE COULDN'T FINISH THE MATCH.



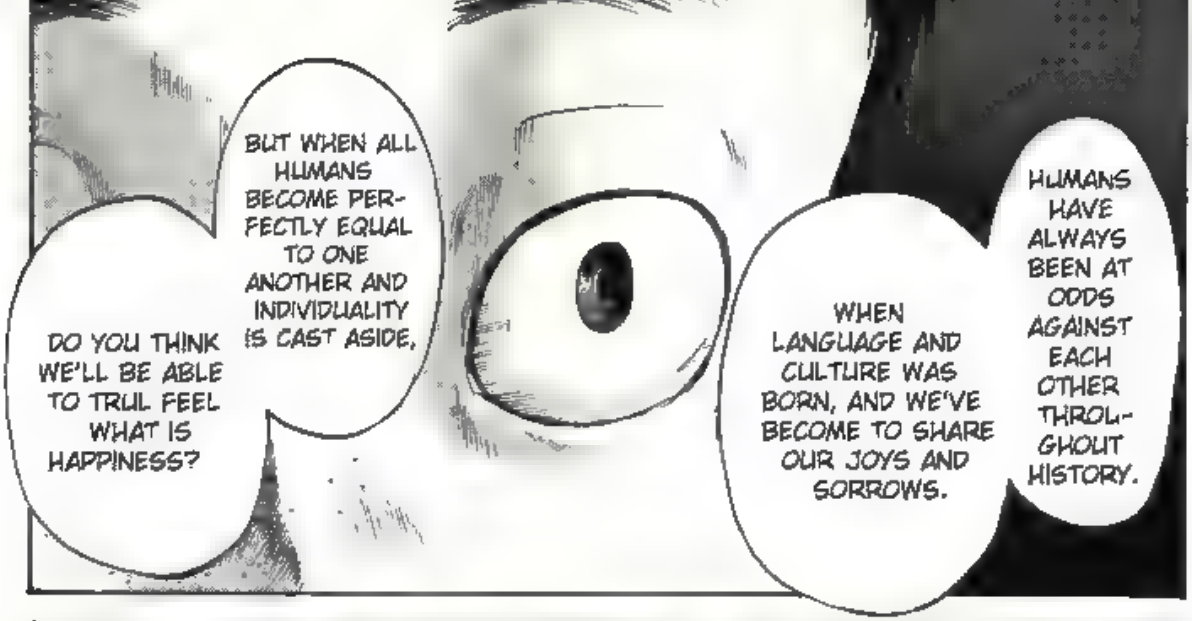

ZOZ!!
. HUH? GO EASY ON HIM?
WHY DO HAVE TO GO EASY ON HIM?

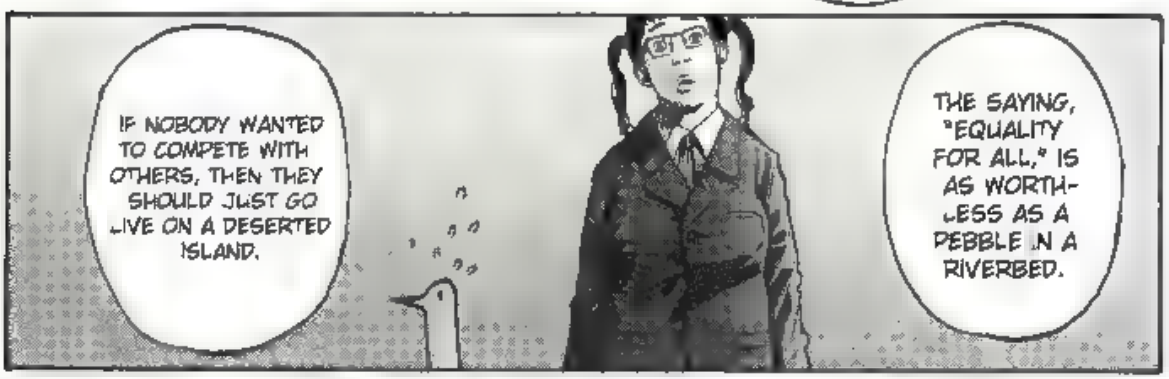
PUNPUN...
LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING THAT'S VERY IMPORTANT TO ME,
WHEN YOU STEP INSIDE THE COURT, WINNING OR LOSING IS EVERYTHING.

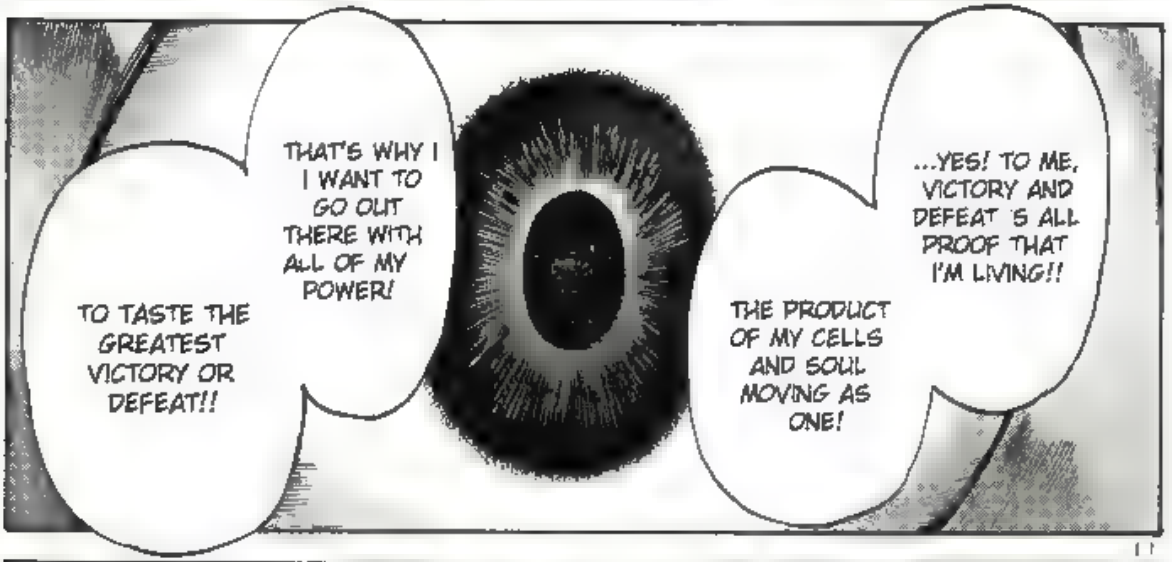


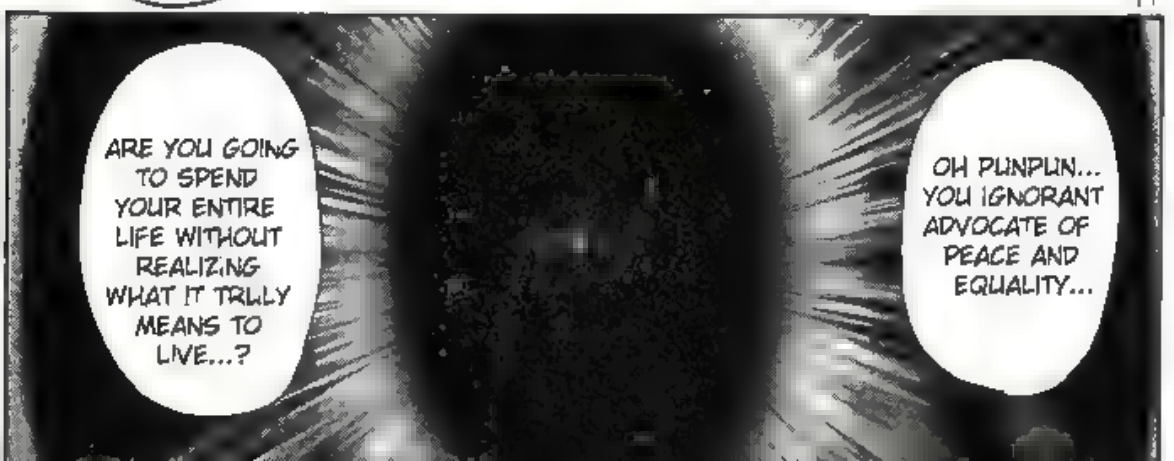
NO MATTER THE CIRCUM-STANCES,
ONCE I STEP INSIDE THAT COURT, I GIVE MY ALL TO SHOW RESPECT TO WHOM-EVER MY OPPONENT MAY BE.
THAT'S MY PRINCIPLE.

IT'S NOT JUST IN SPORTS EITHER.
AS LONG AS ONE IS STANDING ON THE PLAYING COURT THAT IS LIFE, ONE SHOULD ALWAYS GIVE ONE'S ALL.
MANY PEOPLE ALWAYS WANT EQUALITY AND PEACE BUT,
TO BE HONEST, THAT'S JUST LOSER TALK.


HUMANS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN AT ODDS AGAINST EACH OTHER THROUGHOUT HISTORY.
WHEN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE WAS BORN, AND WE'VE BECOME TO SHARE OUR JOYS AND SORROWS.
BUT WHEN ALL HUMANS BECOME PERFECTLY EQUAL TO ONE ANOTHER AND INDIVIDUALITY IS CAST ASIDE,
DO YOU THINK WE'LL BE ABLE TO TRUL FEEL WHAT IS HAPPINESS?


THE SAYING, "EQUALITY FOR ALL," IS AS WORTHLESS AS A PEBBLE IN A RIVERBED.
IF NOBODY WANTED TO COMPETE WITH OTHERS, THEN THEY SHOULD JUST GO LIVE ON A DESERTED ISLAND.

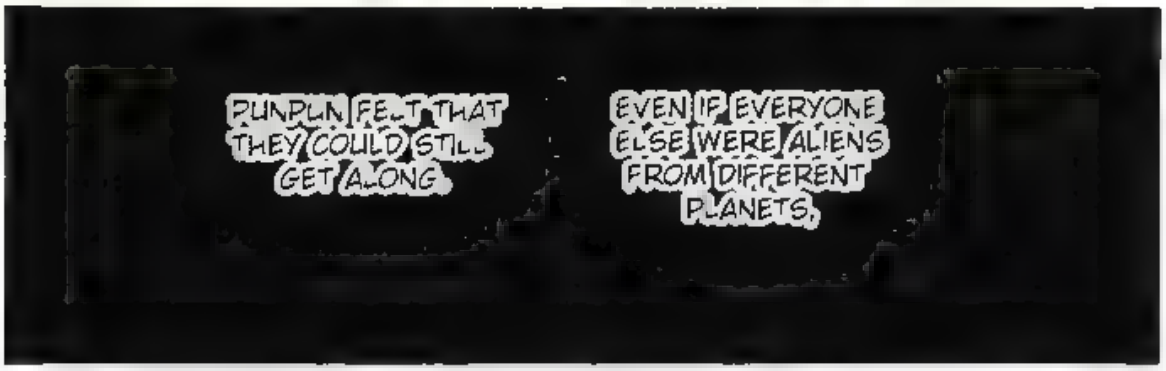

...YES! TO ME, VICTORY AND DEFEAT 'S ALL PROOF THAT I'M LIVING!!
THE PRODUCT OF MY CELLS AND SOUL MOVING AS ONE!
THAT'S WHY I I WANT TO GO OUT THERE WITH ALL OF MY POWER!
TO TASTE THE GREATEST VICTORY OR DEFEAT!!

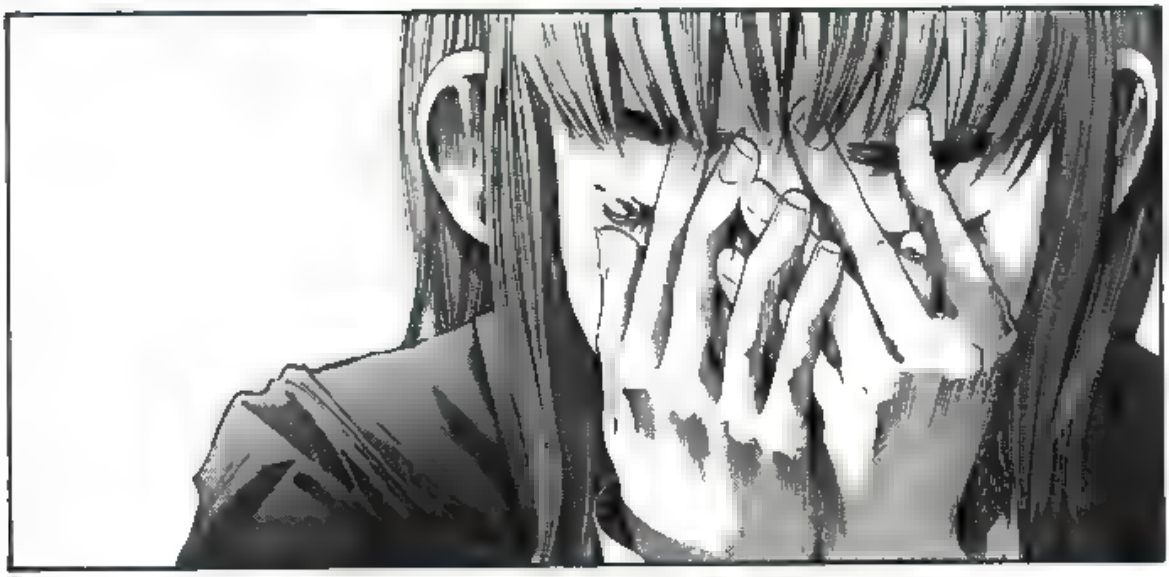

OH PUNPUN... YOU IGNORANT ADVOCATE OF PEACE AND EQUALITY...
ARE YOU GOING TO SPEND YOUR ENTIRE LIFE WITHOUT REALIZING WHAT IT TRULY MEANS TO LIVE...?

『生命(LIFE'S HAPPI-NESS!!)を!!』

I WONDER IF WE COULD MAKE IT ALL THE WAY TO THE CLASS WITHOUT BREATHING.
IS OUR NEXT CLASS IN THE MUL-TIMEDIA ROOM?
PUNPUN DID NOT REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT KOMATSU WAS SAYING.
PUNPUN WONDERED, JUST WHAT WAS SO WRONG ABOUT EVERY-ONE BEING HAPPY.

"EVERYONE THINKS DIFFERENTLY..."
THINKING THAT MADE PUNPUN FEEL STRANGELY DREADFUL.


PUNPUN FELT THAT THEY COULD STILL GET ALONG.
EVEN IF EVERYONE ELSE WERE ALIENS FROM DIFFERENT PLANETS.



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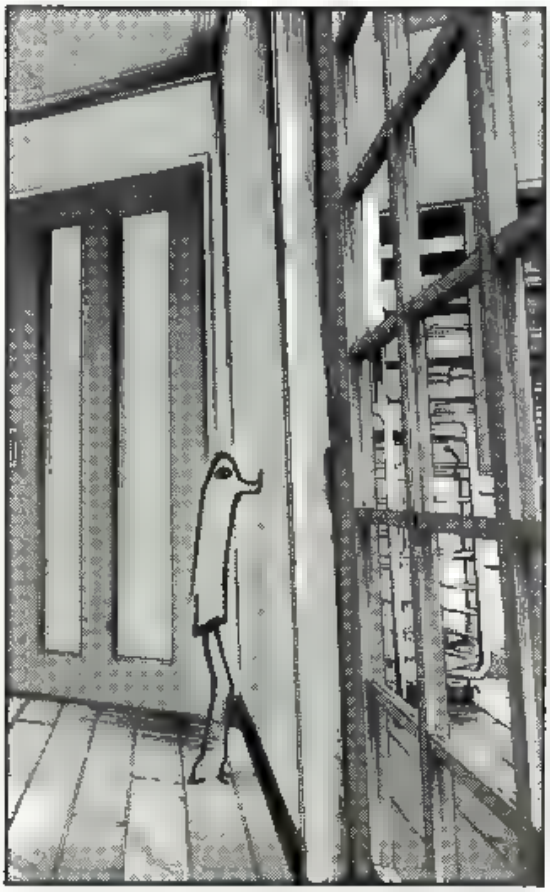

SCANLATED BY HOX

I MADE A HUGE TRANSLATION ERROR WITH YAGURA'S NAME IN MY PREVIOUS RELEASES. HIS CORRECT NAME IS YAGUCHI, NOT YAGURA. I WENT OVER AND FIXED THE NAMER ERROR IN MY PREVIOUS CHAPTERS AND RE-UPLOADED THEM. ONCE AGAIN, I APOLOGIZE, I HOPE I DON'T MAKE ANOTHER EMBARASSING MISTAKE LIKE THIS IN THE FUTURE.

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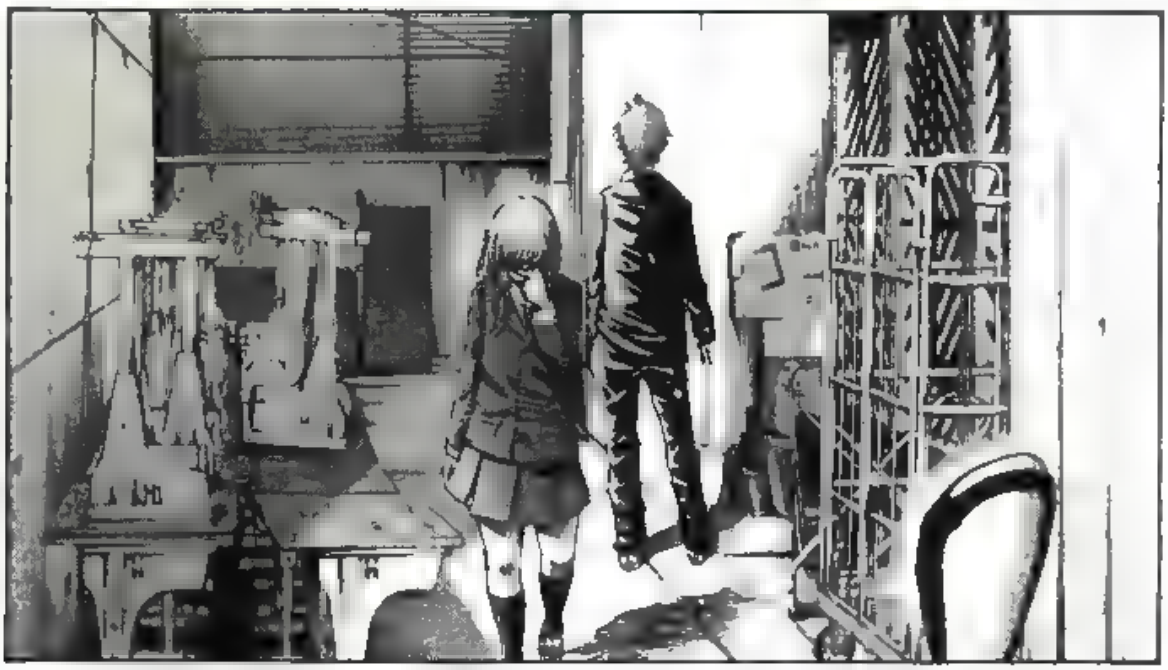
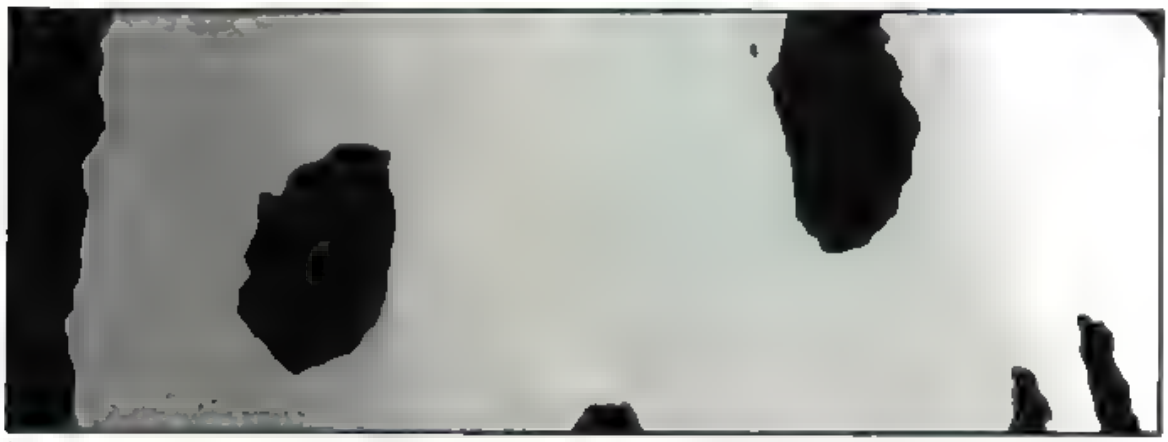
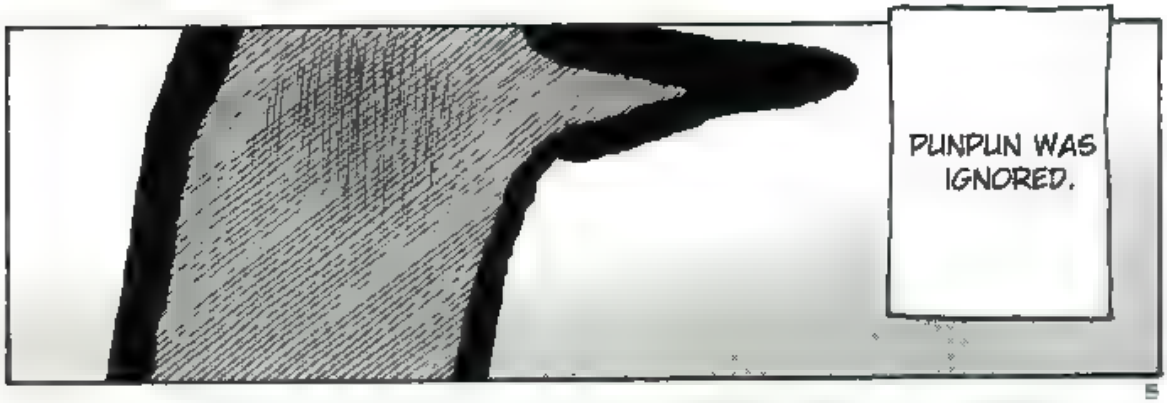
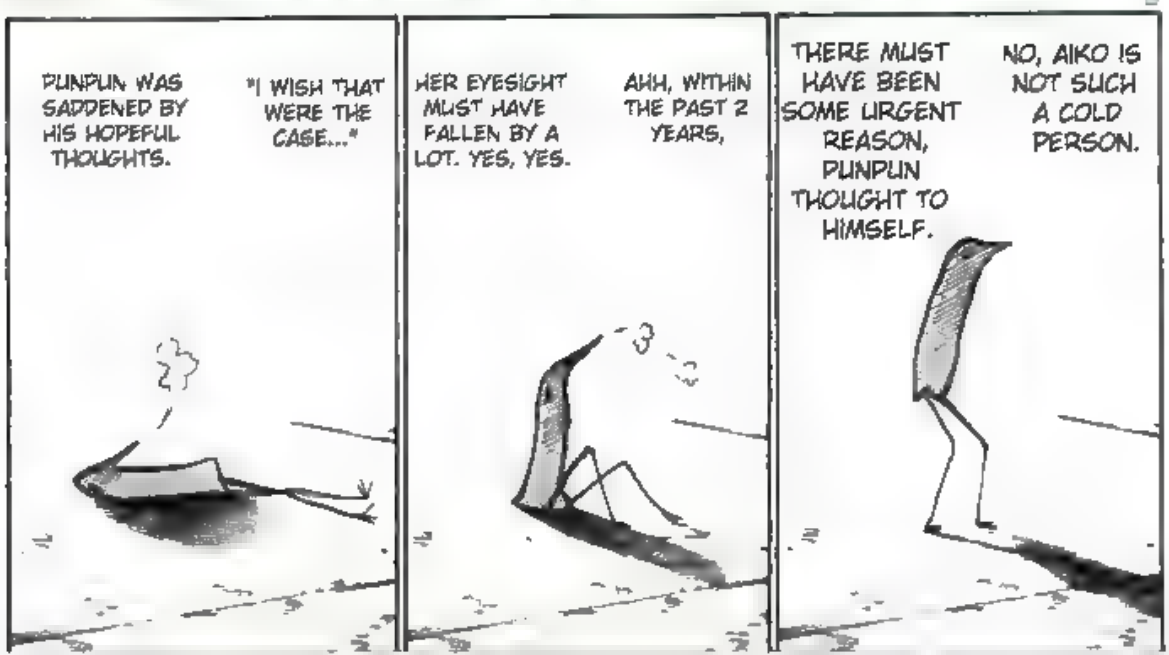
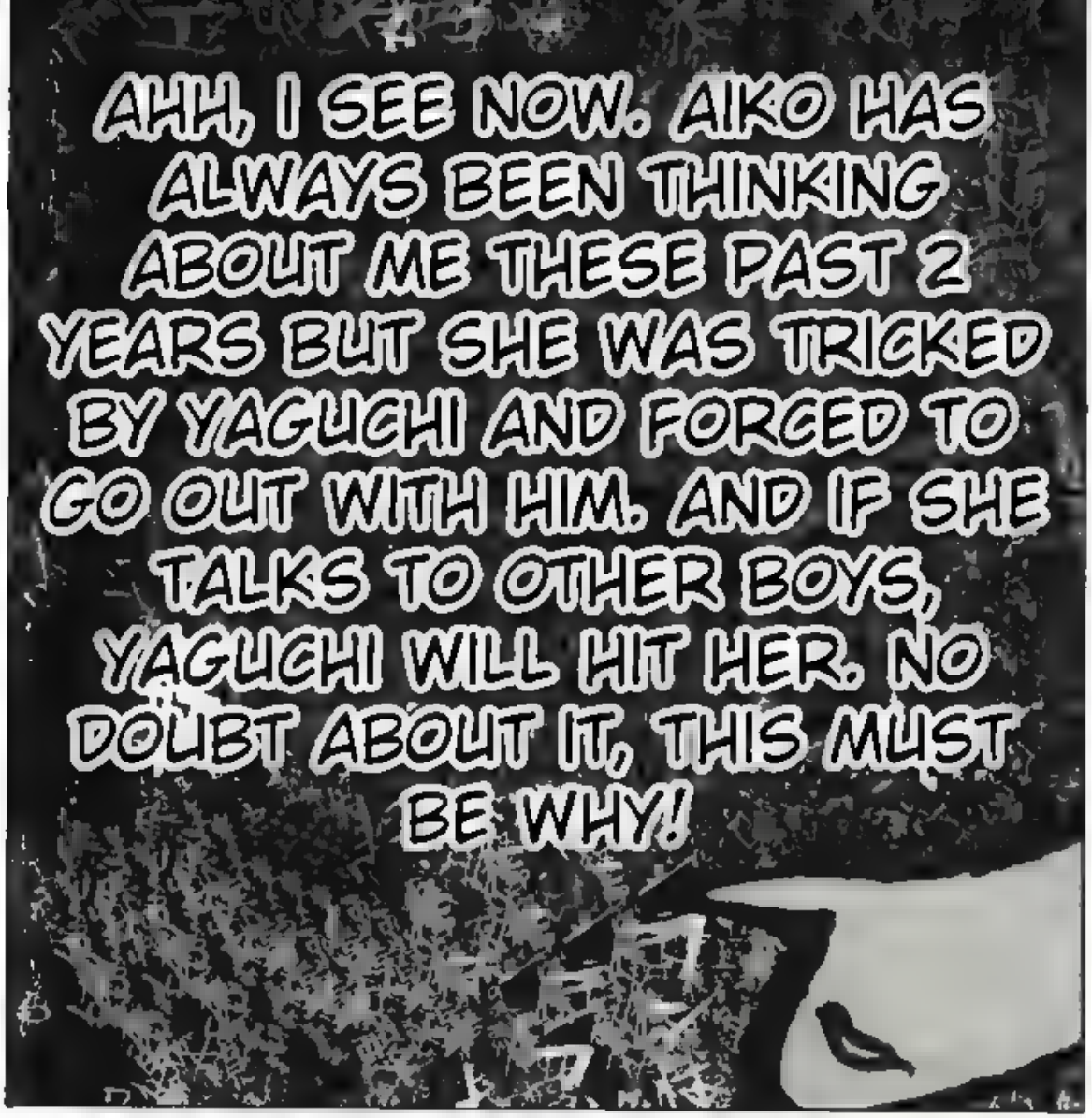


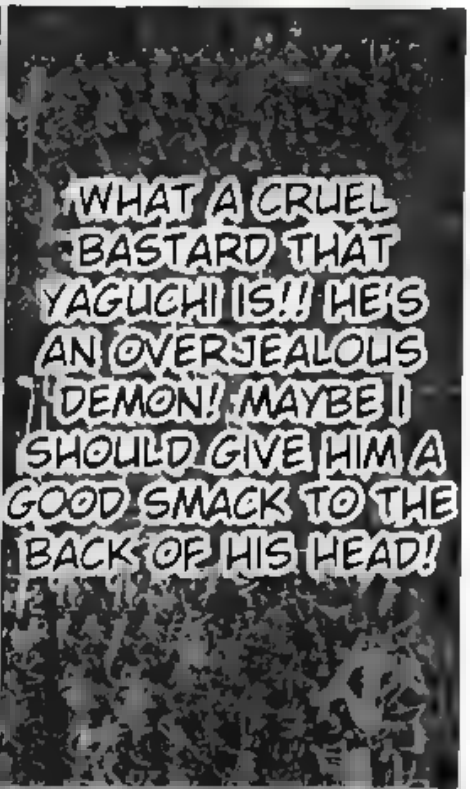


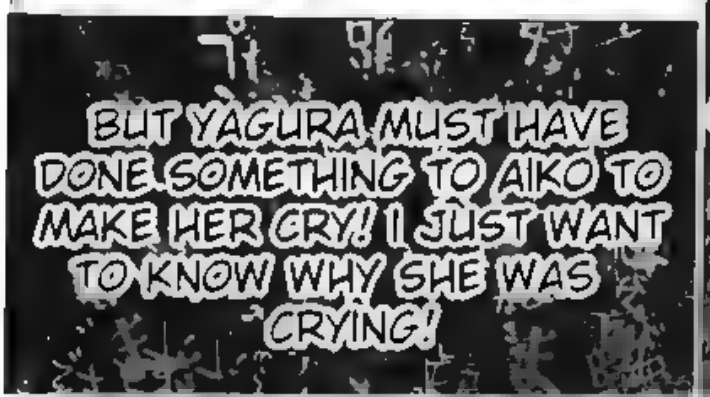

PUNPUN WAS IGNORED.


PUNPUN WAS SADDENED BY HIS HOPEFUL THOUGHTS.
"I WISH THAT WERE THE CASE..."
HER EYESIGHT MUST HAVE FALLEN BY A LOT. YES, YES.
AHH, WITHIN THE PAST 2 YEARS,
THERE MUST HAVE BEEN SOME URGENT REASON, PUNPUN THOUGHT TO HIMSELF.
NO, AIKO IS NOT SUCH A COLD PERSON.

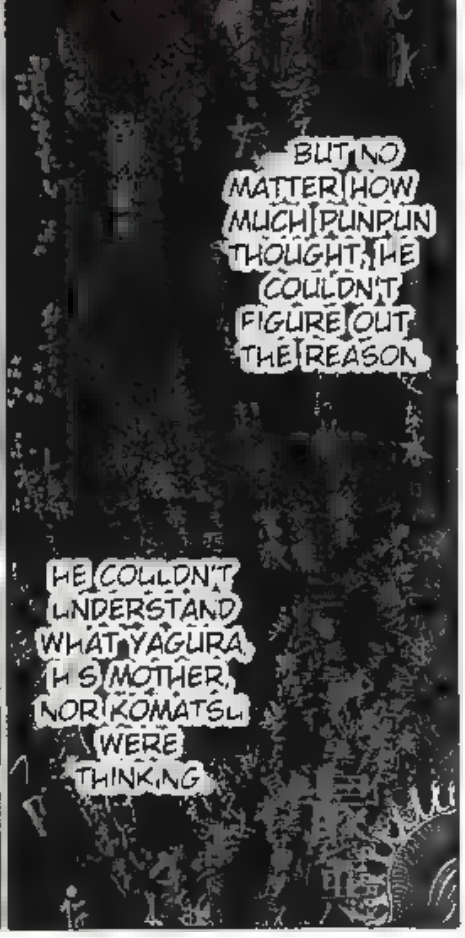

AHH, I SEE NOW. AIKO HAS ALWAYS BEEN THINKING ABOUT ME THESE PAST 2 YEARS BUT SHE WAS TRICKED BY YAGUCHI AND FORCED TO GO OUT WITH HIM. AND IF SHE TALKS TO OTHER BOYS, YAGUCHI WILL HIT HER. NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, THIS MUST BE WHY!

PUNPUN FELT DISGUSTED AT HIMSELF.
YAGURA IS NOT A BAD GUY.


WHAT A CRUEL BASTARD THAT YAGUCHI IS!! HE'S AN OVERJEALOUS DEMON! MAYBE I SHOULD GIVE HIM A GOOD SMACK TO THE BACK OF HIS HEAD!

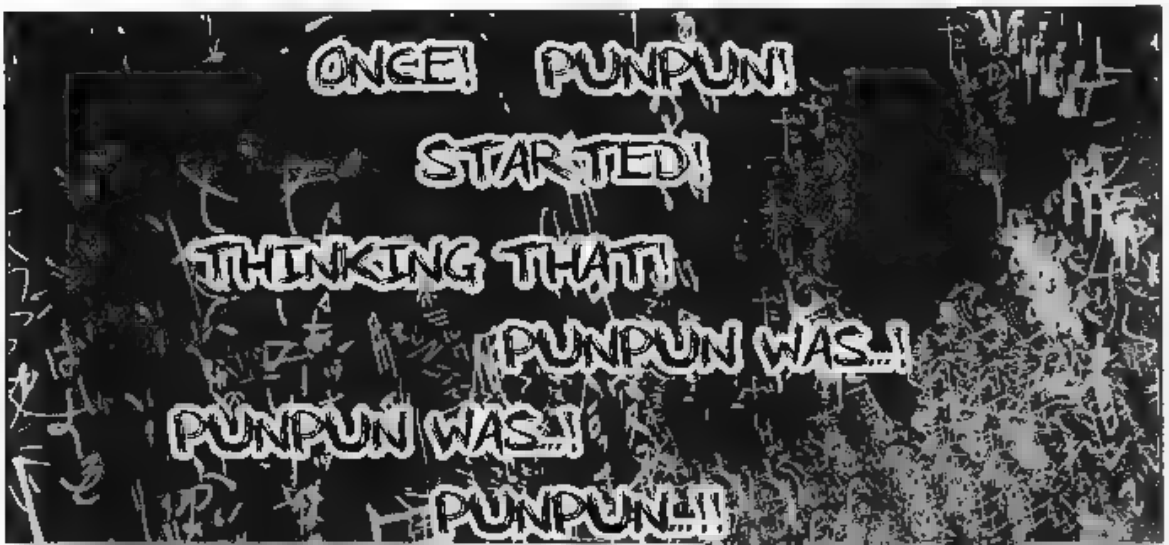

BUT YAGURA MUST HAVE DONE SOMETHING TO AIKO TO MAKE HER CRY! I JUST WANT TO KNOW WHY SHE WAS CRYING!

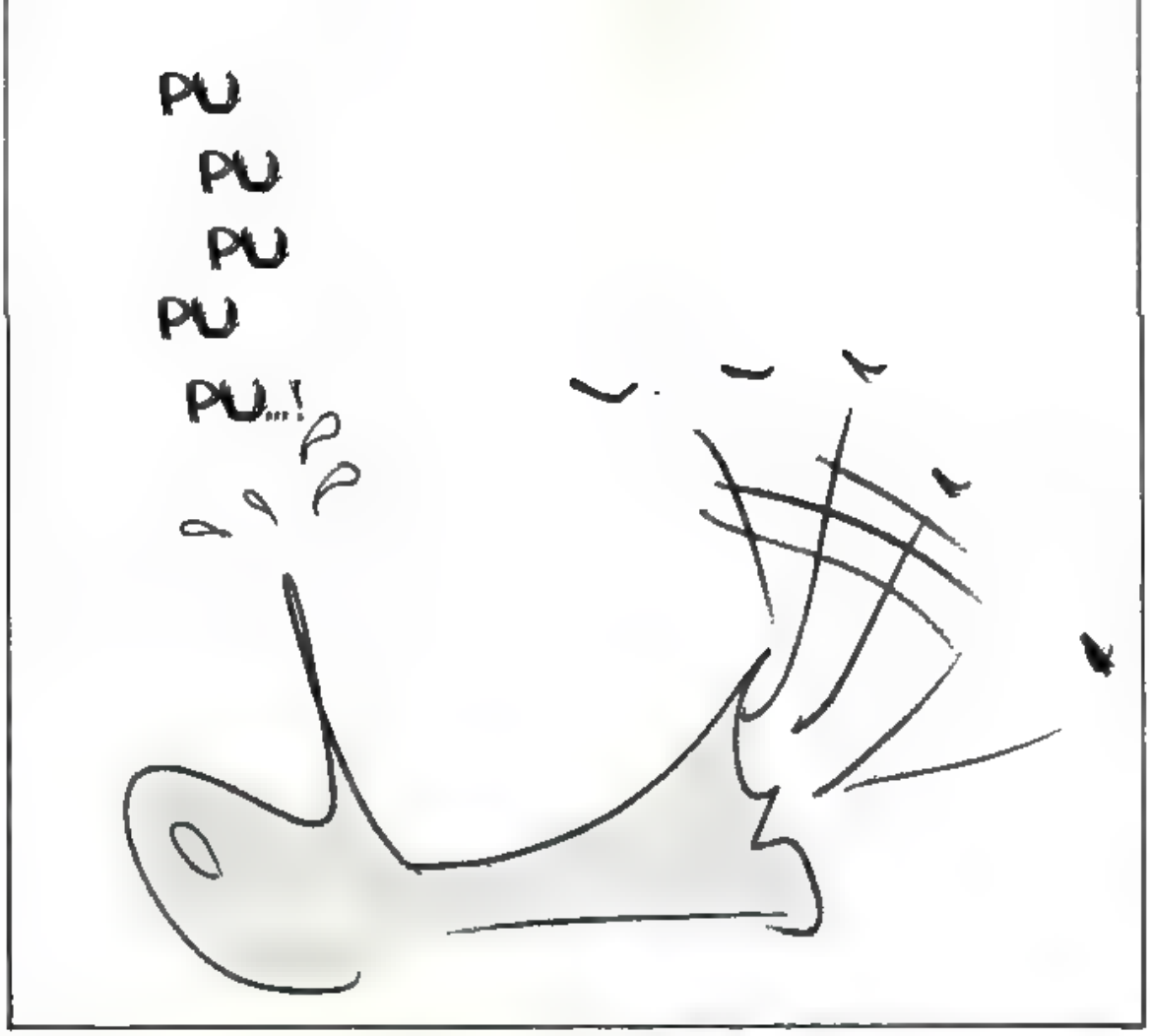
"MAYBE EVEN AKO HAS ALREADY CHANGED SO MUCH THAT SHE'S NO LONGER THE SAME AIKO I KNEW."


BUT NO MATTER HOW MUCH PUNPUN THOUGHT, HE COULDN'T FIGURE OUT THE REASON.
HE COULDN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT YAGURA H S MOTHER, NOR KOMATSU WERE THINKING

MAYBE...

AIKO STILL HATES ME...


ONCE! PUNPUN!
STARTED!
THINKING THAT!
PUNPUN WAS...!
PUNPUN WAS...!
PUNPUN...!!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PU...!

HIS HEART FELT AS IF IT WERE CRUMBLING APART.
8

KOMATSU!
THESE WILL BE THE SINGLES PLAYERS!
YAGUCHI!
IWAMOTO!
HONDA!
THE PREFECTURAL TOURNAMENT IS FINALLY COMING UP NEXT WEEK BUT .
I STILL WANT PLAYERS WHO WEREN'T CHOSEN TO STILL GIVE THEIR BEST!
HEY, YOU 1ST YEARS! MAKE SURE YOU'RE PROPERLY PAYING ATTENTION!!

HEEEYYY!!!
BECAUSE MY HEAD FELT LIKE IT WOULD EXPLODE IF HE STARTED THINKING ABOUT MORE THAN

LET'S WALK HOME TOGETHER!
ONODERA!

YESTER-DAY AT THAT CLINIC,
THE DOCTOR TOLD ME THAT MY CONDITION IS SERIOUS AND HE FORBID ME FROM PLAYING SPORTS.

...THE TOURNA-MENT IS NEXT WEEK, HUH...

IS IT GOING TO SNOW SOON?
IT'S SO COLD.
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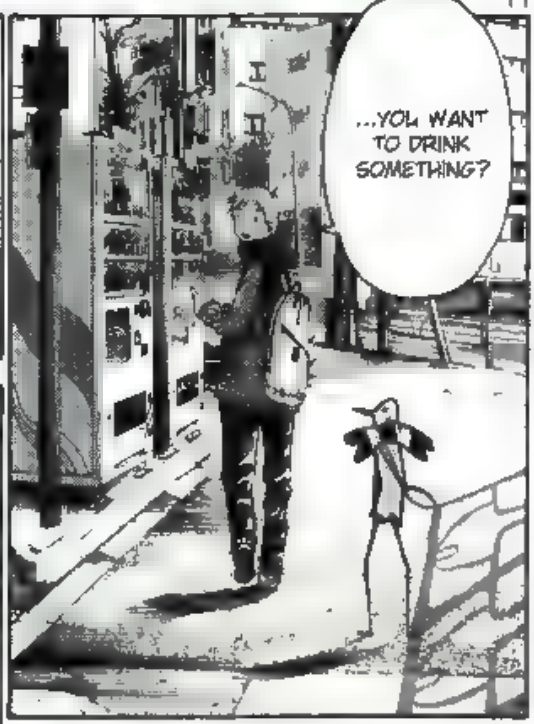
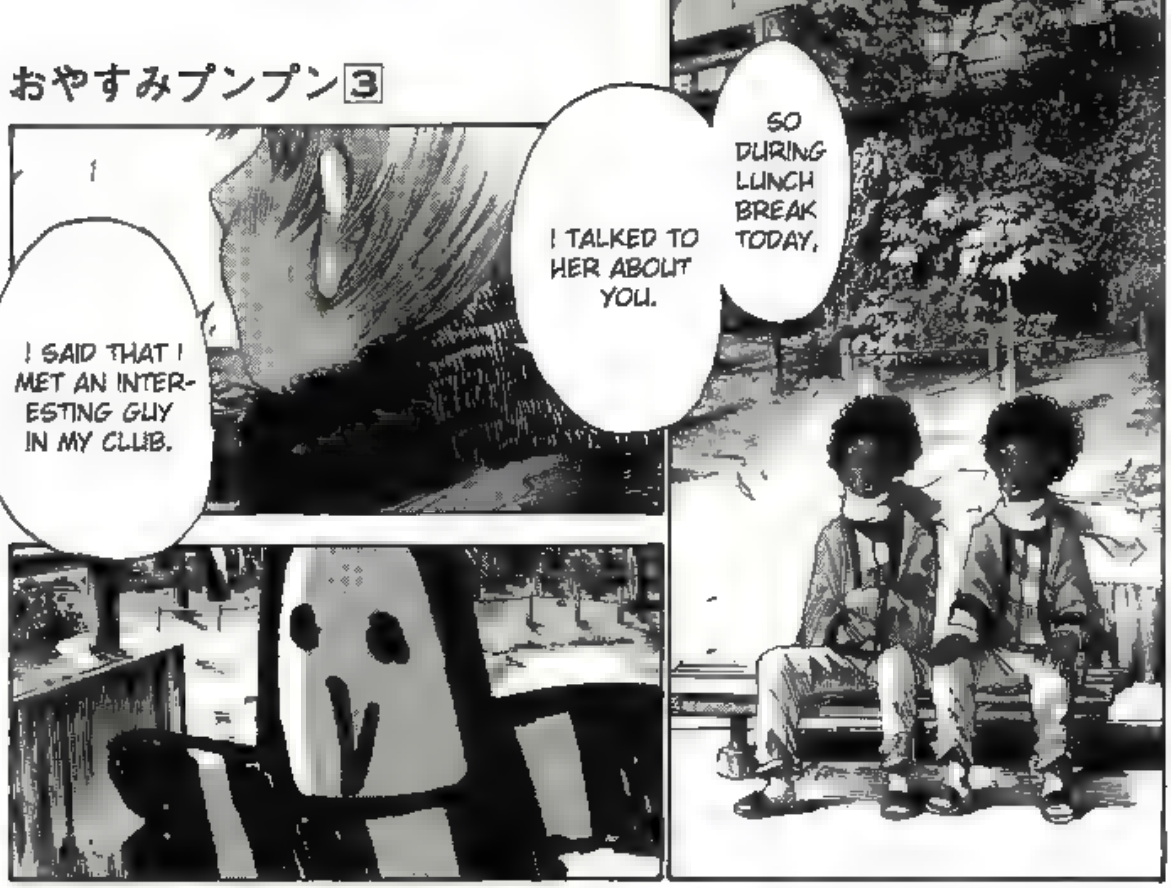

...YOU WANT TO DRINK SOMETHING?

YOU KNOW ..
ABOUT THE GIRLFRIEND I TOLD YOU ABOUT.
EVER SINCE I HELD HER HAND ONCE.
SHE HASN'T LET ME TOUCH HER ONCE SINCE THEN.

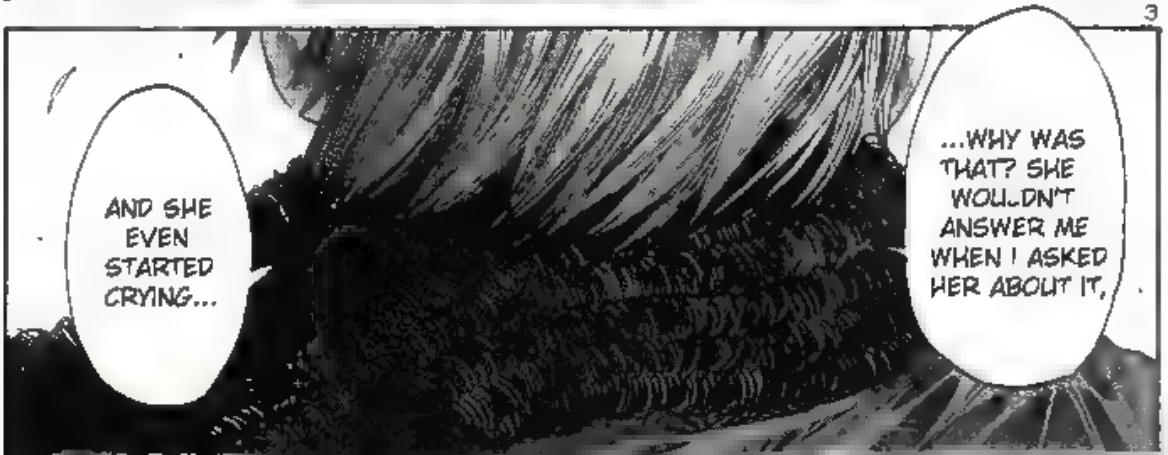
2

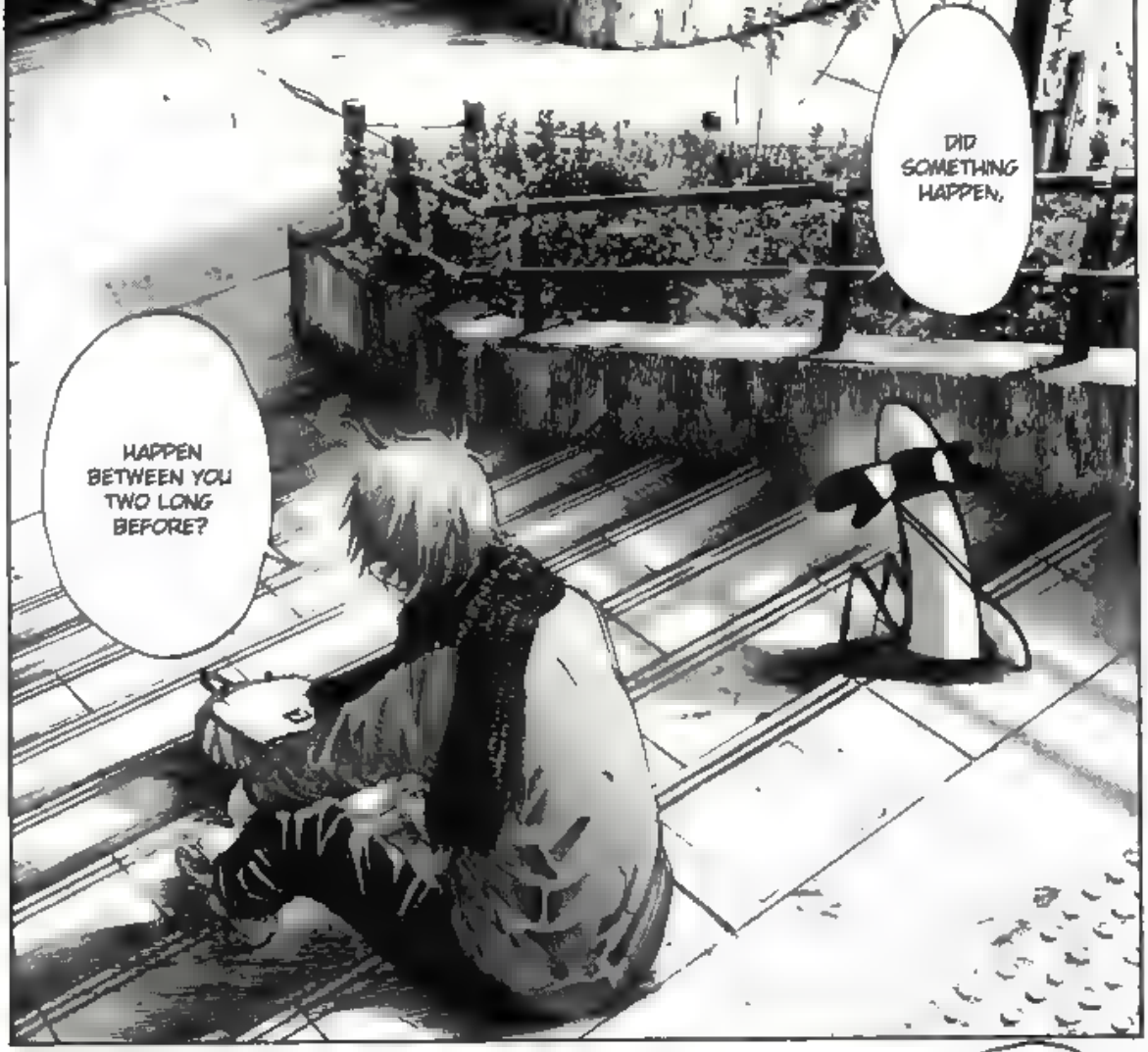
DUNDUN COULD NOT FIGURE OUT WHAT WAS GOING ON IN AKO'S MIND

WHY DO YOU THINK THAT IS?
I MEAN, SHE WAS THE ONE WHO CONFESSED TO ME IN THE FIRST PLACE.


SO DURING LUNCH BREAK TODAY,
I TALKED TO HER ABOUT YOU.
I SAID THAT I MET AN INTERESTING GUY IN MY CLUB.

AND ONCE I SAID THAT,
HER EXPRESSION CHANGED SUDDENLY.


...WHY WAS THAT? SHE WOULDN'T ANSWER ME WHEN I ASKED HER ABOUT IT,
AND SHE EVEN STARTED CRYING...

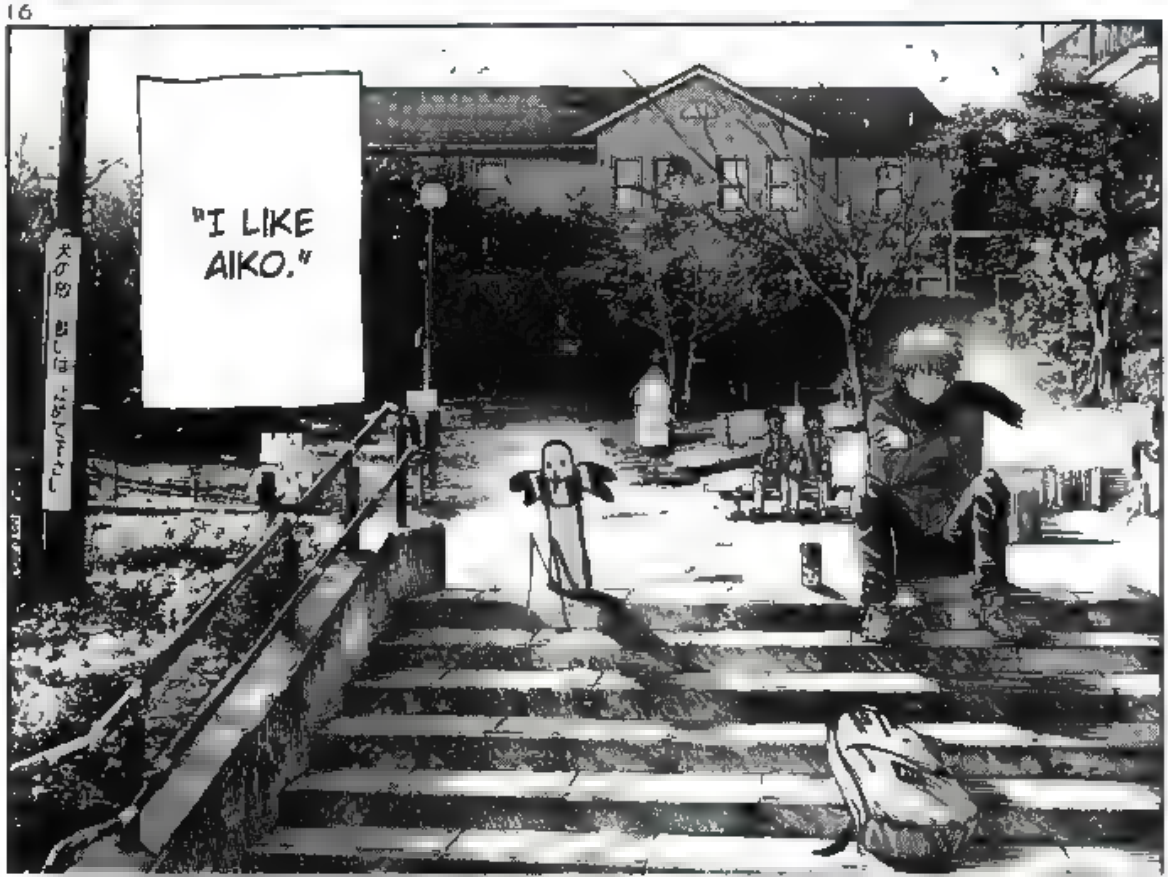

DID SOMETHING HAPPEN,
HAPPEN BETWEEN YOU TWO LONG BEFORE?

14

MAYBE -
I'M REALLY PATHETIC FOR SAYING THIS...
THE ONE THAT TANAKA REALLY LIKES?
IS ONODERA,

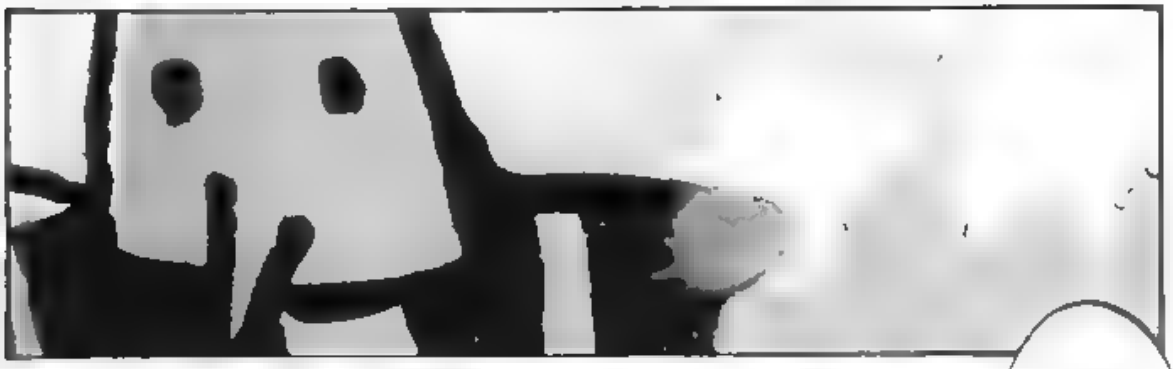
TANAKA LEFT AS SOON AS SCHOOL ENDED
I...I WAS THINKING REALLY HARD...
I THOUGHT I SHOULD TRY TO EARN SOME MONEY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO MAKE TANAKA HAPPY
SHE GOES TO SEE HER ILL FATHER IN THE HOSPIATAL
AND THAT I SHOULD JUST GIVE UP ON BADMINTON!
BEC-AUSE!
TANAKA ALWAYS HAS SUCH A SAD EXPRESSION!
I NEED TO DO SOMETHING!!
THAT PART OF HER HASN'T CHANGED AT ALL, PUNPUN THOUGHT TO HIMSELF
IT WAS TRUE, SOMETHING ABOUT AIKO'S EXPRESSION ALWAYS LOOKED A LITTLE SORROWFUL

16



SCANLATED BY HOX

"I...LIKE AIKO."



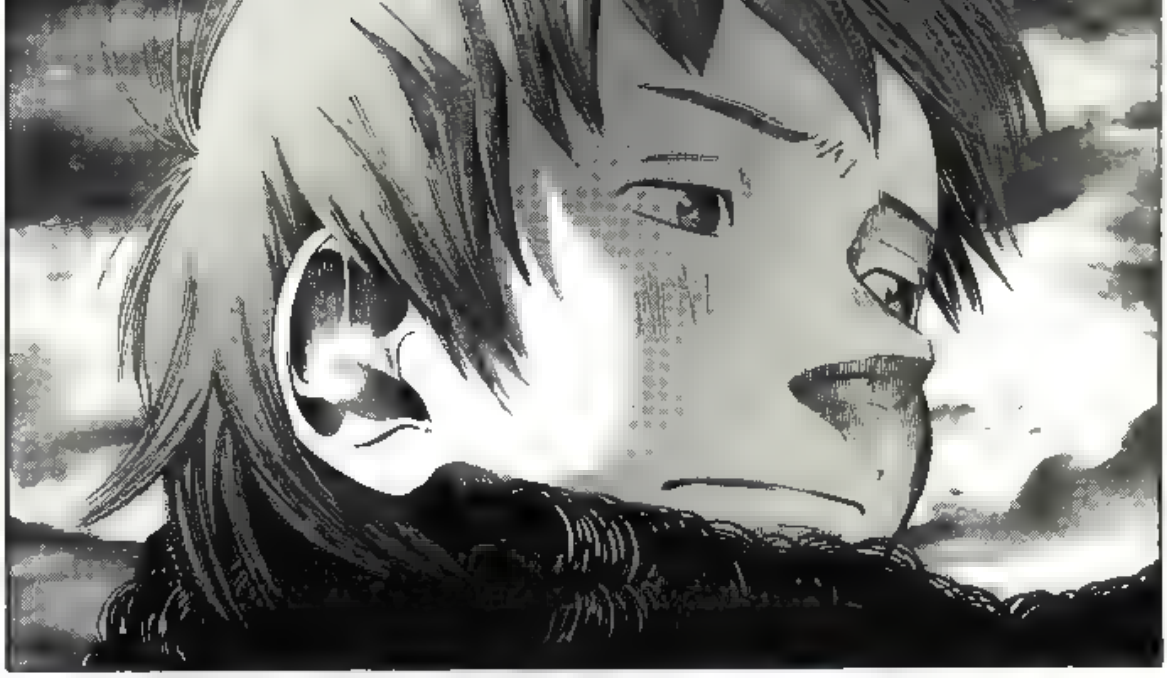
ONODERA...
I...DON'T REALLY WANT TO LISTEN TO YOUR FEELINGS...
PUNPUN SAID WITH THE QUIETEST VOICE.

AAAAGG GGHHHH HHH!!!!
AGHHH!
AGHHH!!
...WHAT THE HELL. ! DON'T KNOW WHAT'S WHAT ANYMORE.
MY MIND FEELS SO CLOUDY...
I FEEL ...
LIKE HALF OF MY SELF IS CRUMBLING AWAY...
GUESS IT WAS BETTER FOR ME TO DO NOTHING BUT BAD-MINTON...
I CAN'T EVEN GET A GIRLFRIEND!
2

SHIT... I JUST CAN'T MAKE A CHOICE...!!
IF I CAN'T GET BOTH, I DON'T WANT EITHER!
...THE HELL...
SHIT...

ONODERA!!
IF I LOSE IN THE TOURNAMENT NEXT WEEK, I'LL FORGET ABOUT TANAKA!!
...AND SO YOU HAVE TO PROPERLY CONFESS TO TANAKA!
...BUT,

TANAKA WILL BE MINE FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE!!
IF I WIN...

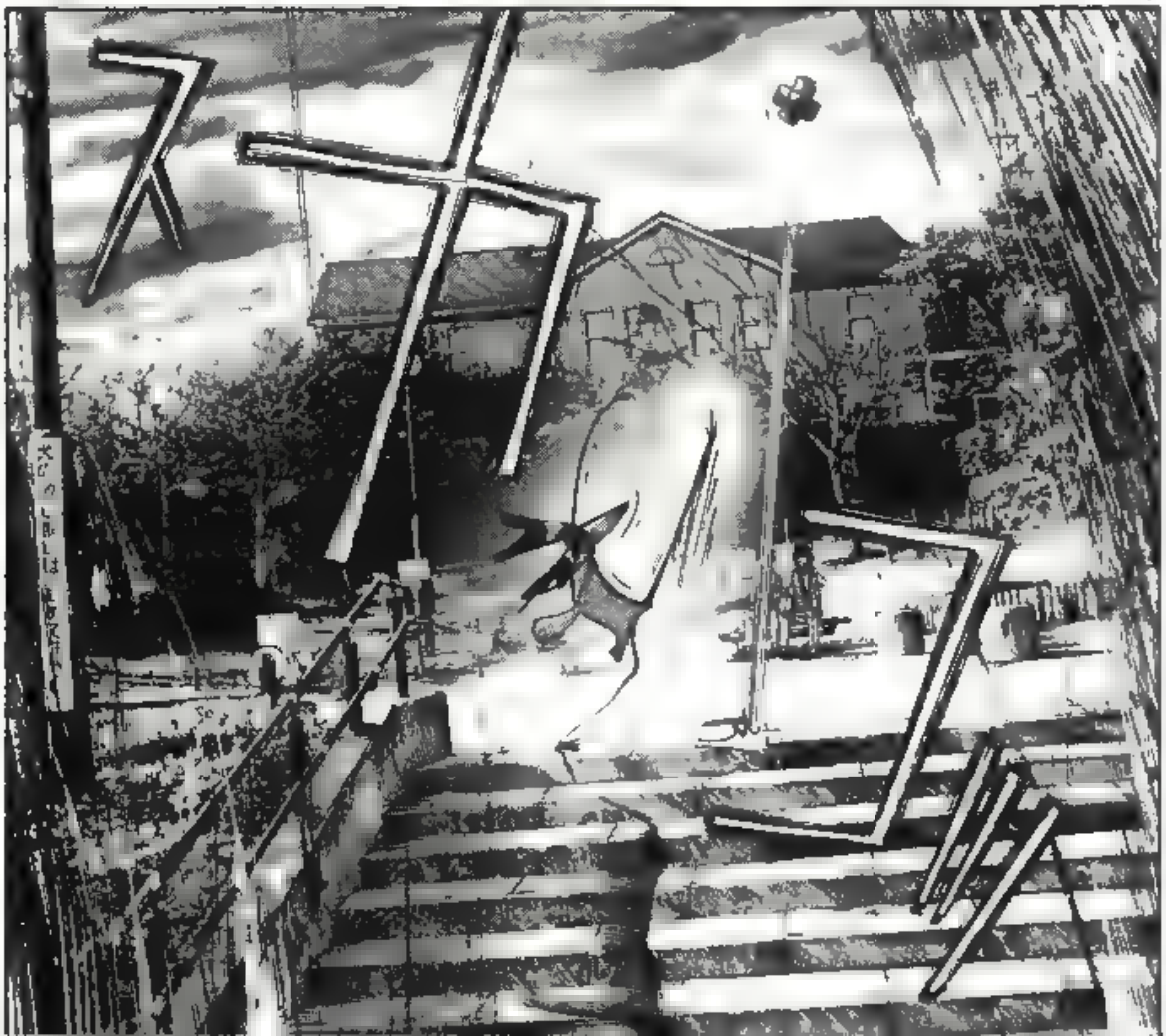


...SEE YA.

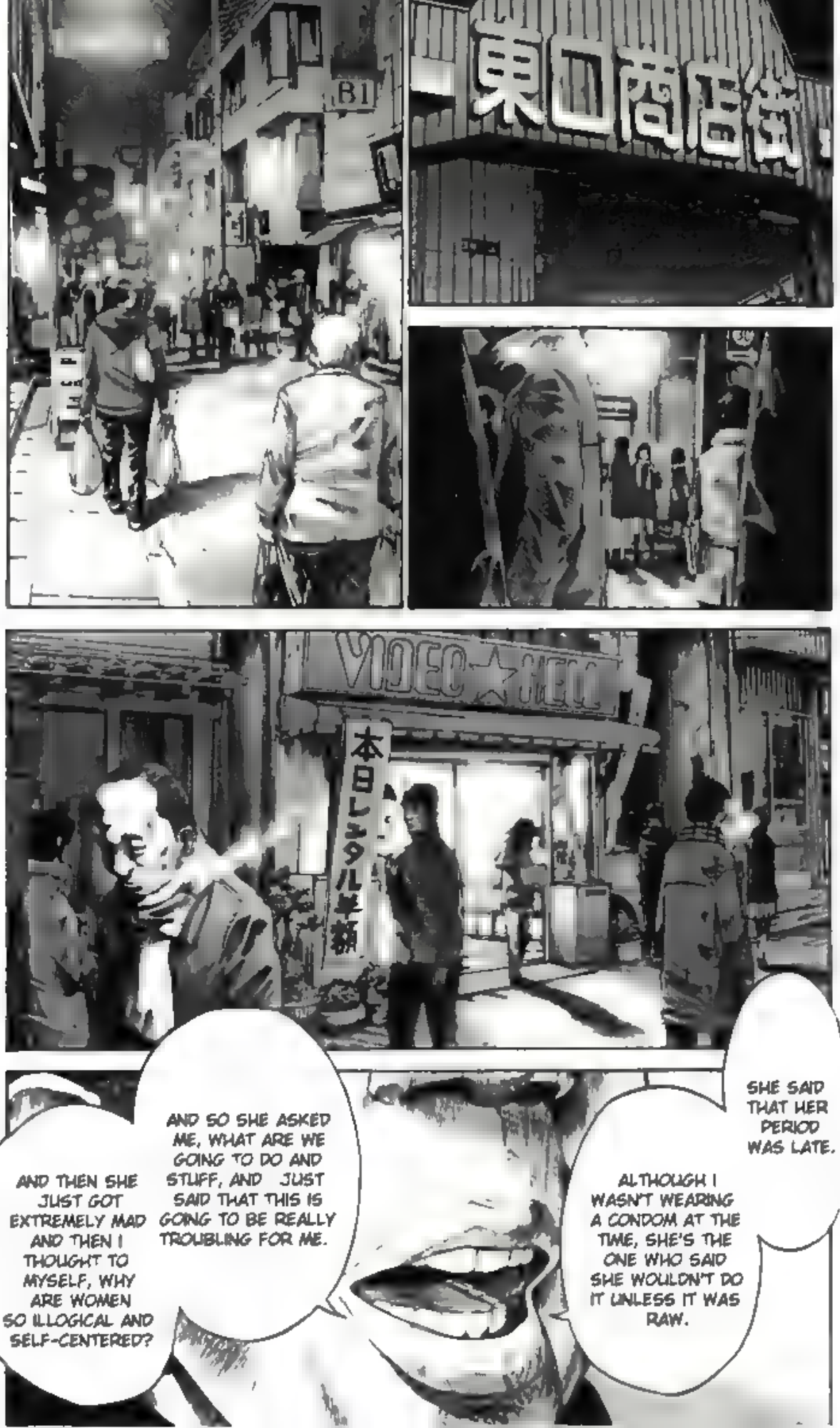
...IT'S ME.

"THE ONE WHO'LL PROTECT AIKO IS ME."

POKKE



YOUNG SUNDAY COMICS
おやすみプンプン ③
浅野いにお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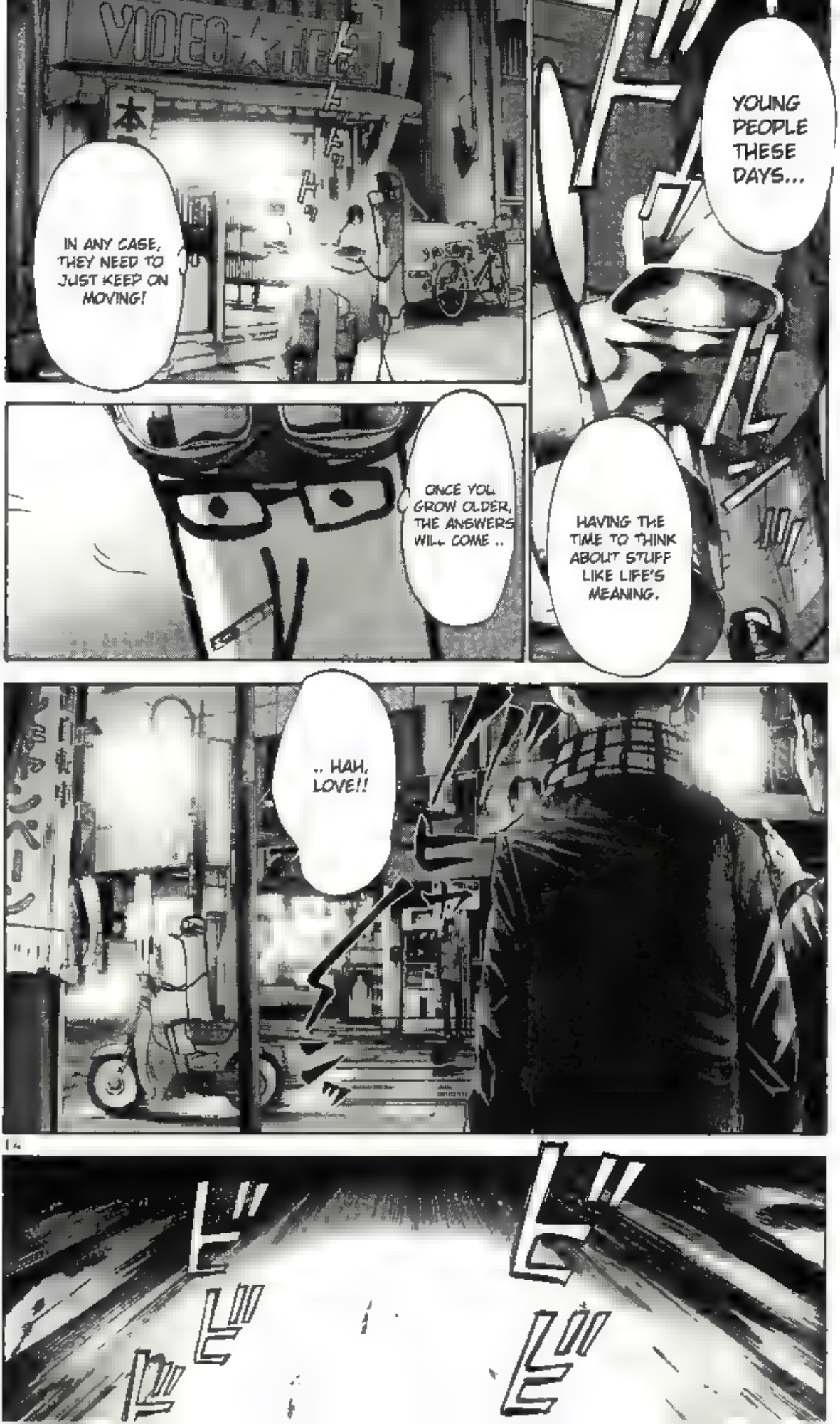
東口商店街
VIDEO☆
本日レンタル半額
SHE SAID THAT HER PERIOD WAS LATE.
ALTHOUGH I WASN'T WEARING A CONDOM AT THE TIME, SHE'S THE ONE WHO SAID SHE WOULDN'T DO IT UNLESS IT WAS RAW.
AND SO SHE ASKED ME, WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO AND STUFF, AND JUST SAID THAT THIS IS GOING TO BE REALLY TROUBLING FOR ME.
AND THEN SHE JUST GOT EXTREMELY MAD AND THEN I THOUGHT TO MYSELF, WHY ARE WOMEN SO ILLOGICAL AND SELF-CENTERED?

...AND THAT'S THE CRAZY DREAM I HAD LAST NIGHT IN BED.
WHAT CAN I DO TO GET A GIRLFRIEND?
.YOU'RE A TOUGH ONE.
. .WELL, LOVE IS REALLY JUST A DRUG TO EASE THE FEAR AND UNEASINESS OF LONELINESS.
BUT THAT FEAR WILL BE WAITING FOR YOU ONCE THE DRUG WEARS OFF. IN THE END, THERE'S REALLY NO DIFFERENCE FROM LIVING ALONE.
2
MR. ONODERA,
WHAT WAS YOUR AGE AGAIN?
33.
MR.ONO-DERA, IS LIVING FUN?

WELL, THAT'S...
I CAN'T SAY IT'S REALLY FUN BUT I CAN'T SAY IT'S BAD EITHER.
HAHA.
YOU SOUNDED PRETTY COOL THERE.
THEN WHAT IS LIVING TO YOU?

HMM. PERHAPS REDEMPTION.

THANKS.
WOAH.
I THINK I'LL USE THAT AT THE NEXT MIXER.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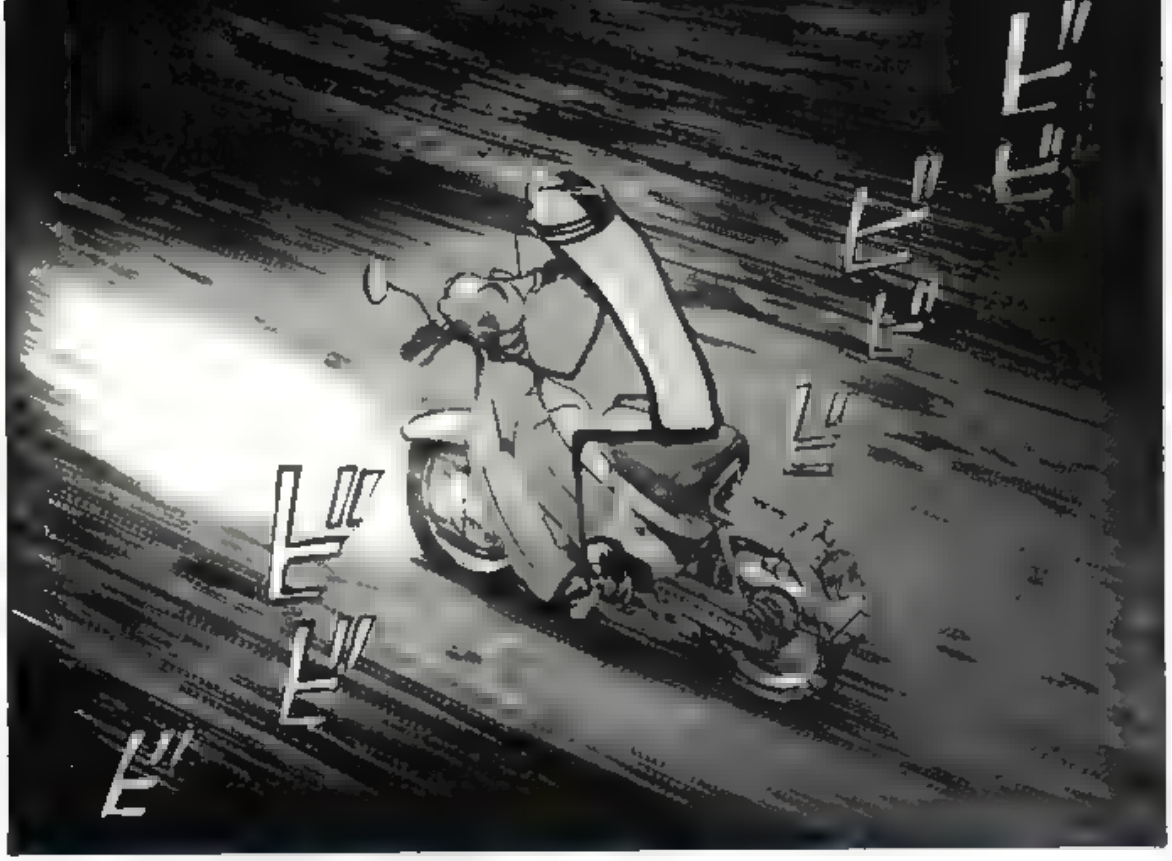
IN ANY CASE, THEY NEED TO JUST KEEP ON MOVING!
YOUNG PEOPLE THESE DAYS...
ONCE YOU GROW OLDER, THE ANSWERS WILL COME ..
HAVING THE TIME TO THINK ABOUT STUFF LIKE LIFE'S MEANING.
.. HAH, LOVE!!
14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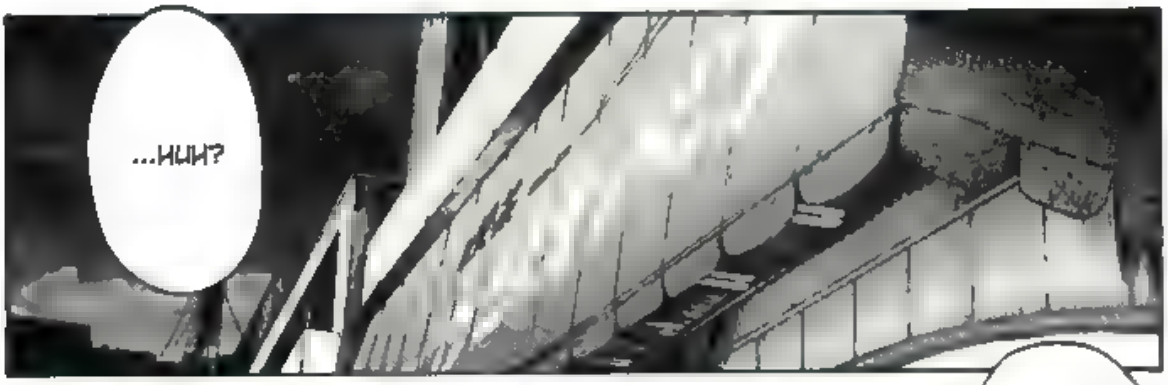
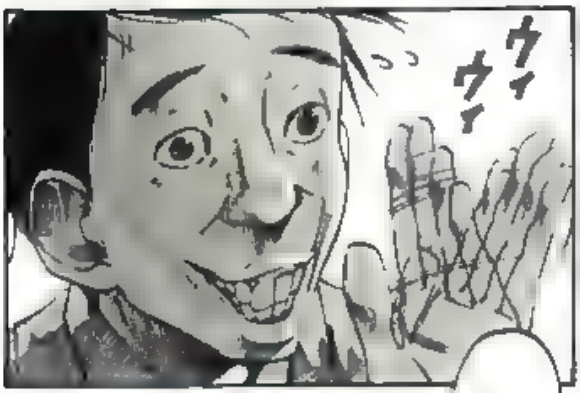

...HUH?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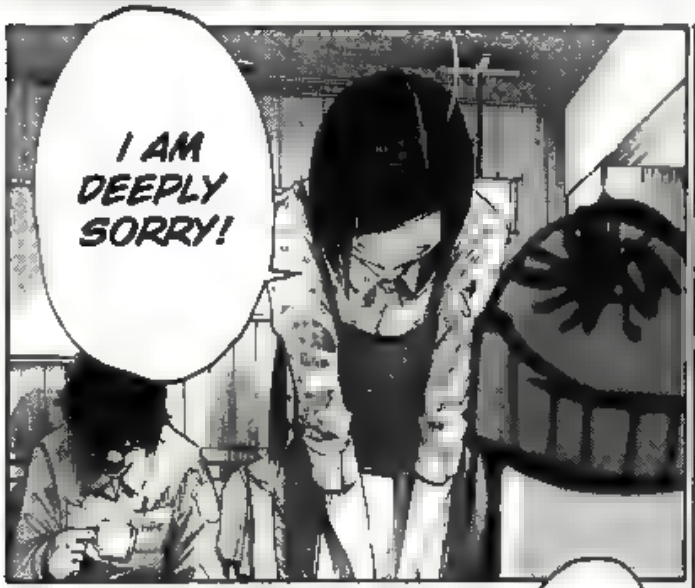
AH, YUGAMI, YOU CAME! ARE YOU GOING HOME NOW?
IF YOU HAVE THE TIME, DO YOU WANT TO HAVE A CUP OF COFFEE WITH ME?

...OH I SEE.
ALRIGHT, I'LL SEE YOU SOME OTHER TIME THEN.

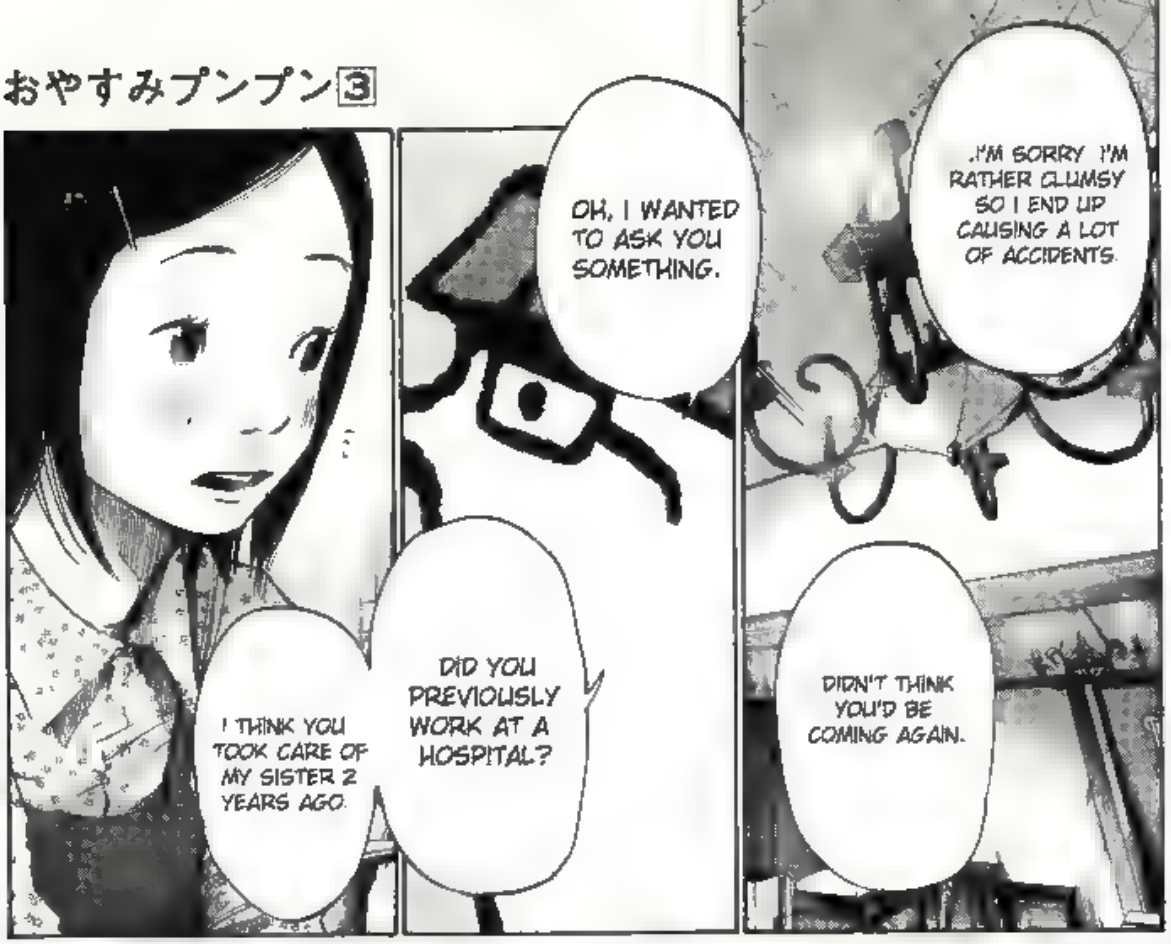
UMM... A CINNAMON FRENCH TOAST,
AND A KILIMANJARO BLEND.

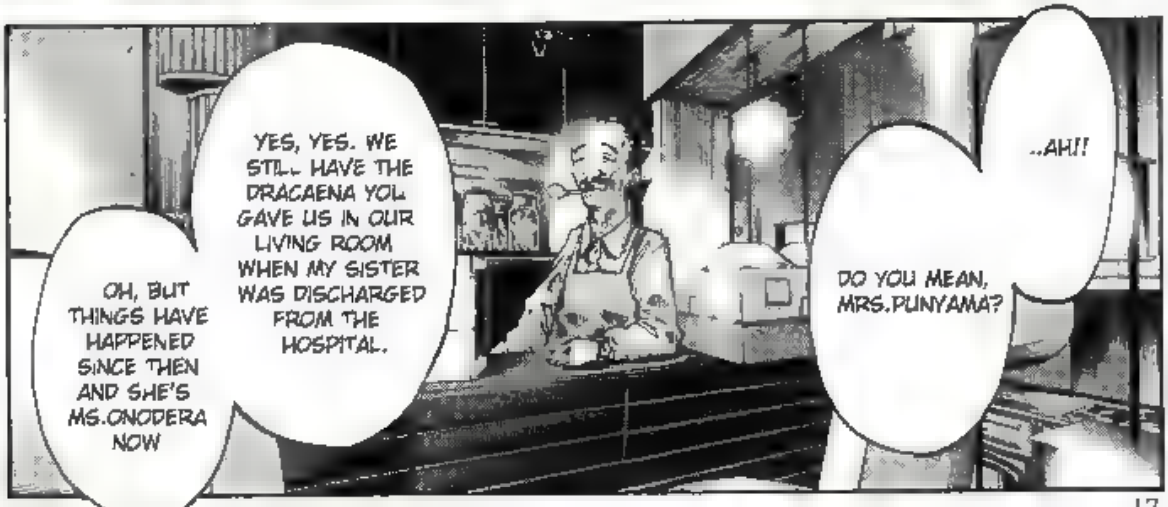

I AM DEEPLY SORRY!

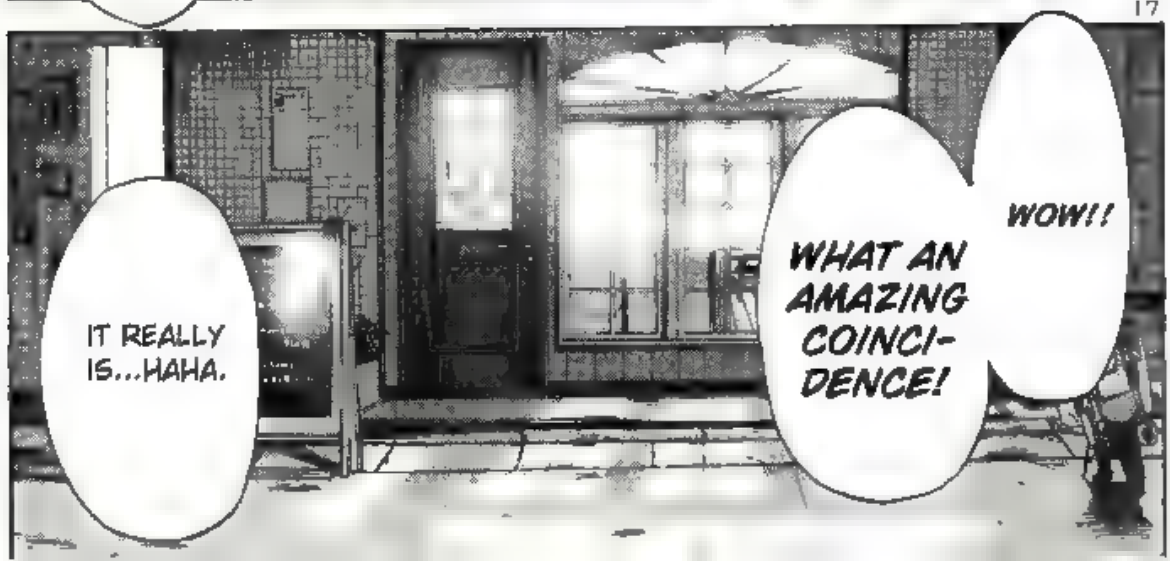
UMM...
ABOUT THE OTHER DAY...

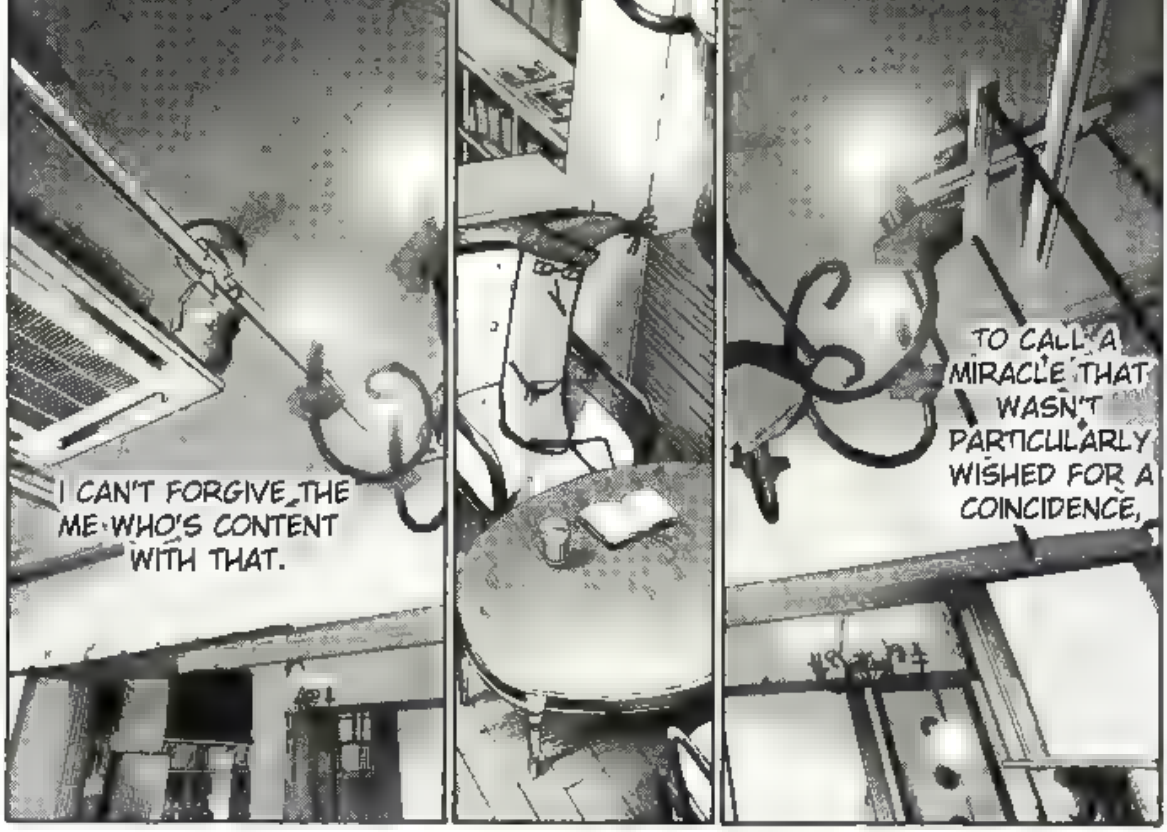
6

AH, IT'S FINE. IT'S NOT LIKE I GOT BURNT OR ANY-THING.
WELL, I LOST MY NOTE-BOOK BUT WHATEVER. HAHA.


I'M SORRY. I'M RATHER CLUMSY SO I END UP CAUSING A LOT OF ACCIDENTS.
OH, I WANTED TO ASK YOU SOMETHING.
DIDN'T THINK YOU'D BE COMING AGAIN.
DID YOU PREVIOUSLY WORK AT A HOSPITAL?
I THINK YOU TOOK CARE OF MY SISTER 2 YEARS AGO.


..AH!!
DO YOU MEAN, MRS.PUNYAMA?
YES, YES. WE STILL HAVE THE DRACAENA YOU GAVE US IN OUR LIVING ROOM WHEN MY SISTER WAS DISCHARGED FROM THE HOSPITAL.
OH, BUT THINGS HAVE HAPPENED SINCE THEN AND SHE'S MS.ONODERA NOW


WOW!!
WHAT AN AMAZING COINCI-DENCE!
IT REALLY IS...HAHA.


I CAN'T FORGIVE THE ME WHO'S CONTENT WITH THAT.
TO CALL A MIRACLE THAT WASN'T PARTICULARLY WISHED FOR A COINCIDENCE,

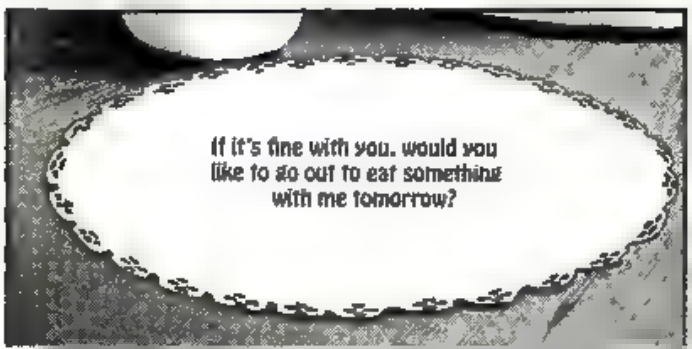
IT'S NOT PRETTY.

IT'S, UNSI-GHTLY.
A LOVE MADE JUST SO THAT THE TWO CAN LICK EACH OTHER'S WOUNDS,

AND HERE ARE YOUR ORDERS!

HEY, HEY.
I DIDN'T ORDER AN ICE COFFEE.

..BUT IT'S THE MIDDLE OF WINTER!!


If it's fine with you, would you like to go out to eat something with me tomorrow?

THAT'S SPECIAL SERVICE!

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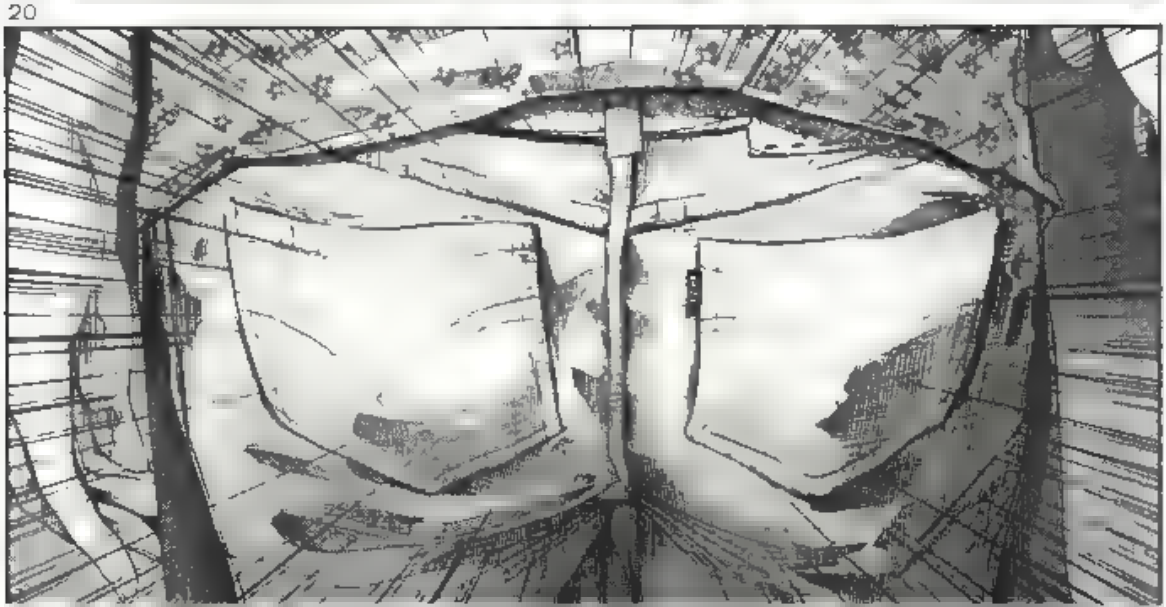

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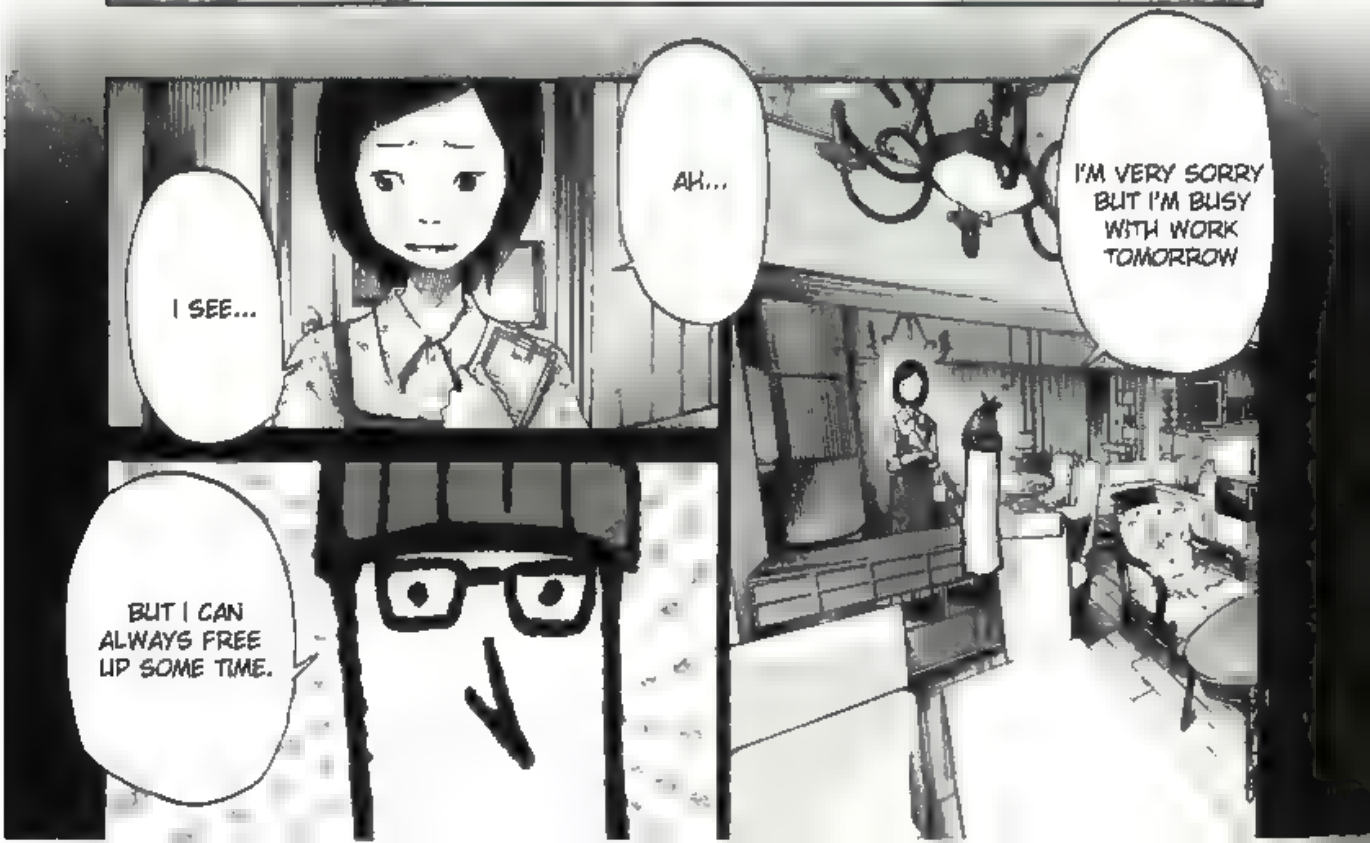
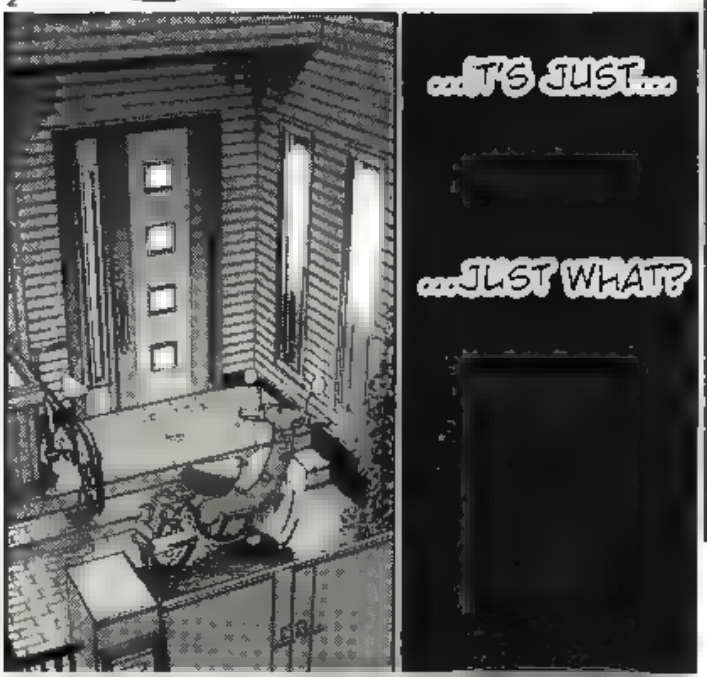

I'M VERY SORRY BUT I'M BUSY WITH WORK TOMORROW
AH...
I SEE...
BUT I CAN ALWAYS FREE UP SOME TIME.

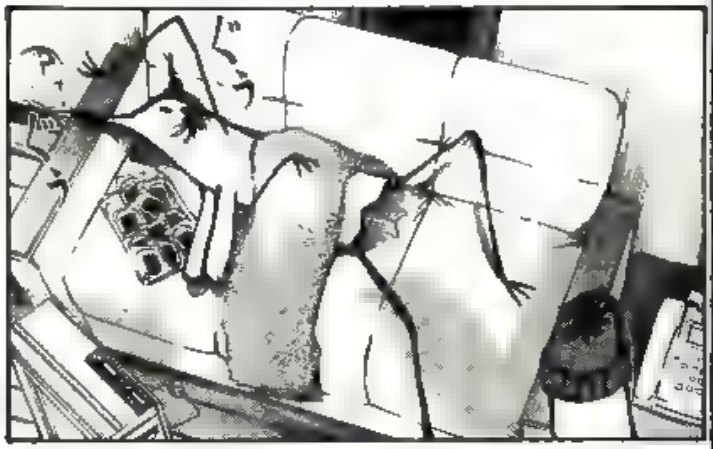
YOU IDIOT!!

NO, NO IT'S NOT LIKE I'M EXPECTING ANYTHING FROM HER..

...YOU KNOW IT'S JUST THE WHIMS OF A YOUNG GIRL, RIGHT?
JUST WHAT AM I DOING HOPING FOR THAT TO HAPPEN AT MY OLD AGE?

2

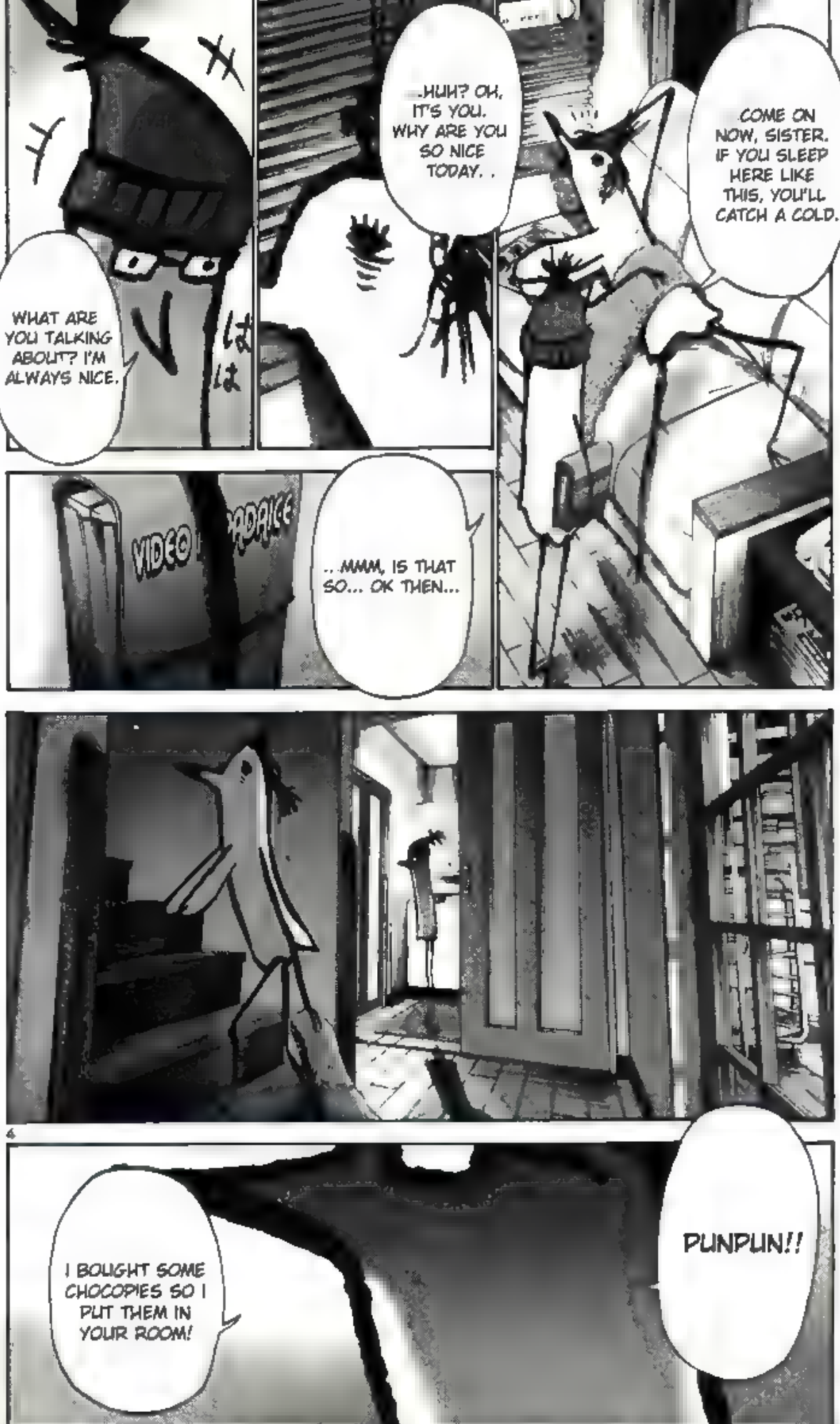

...IT'S JUST...
...JUST WHAT?



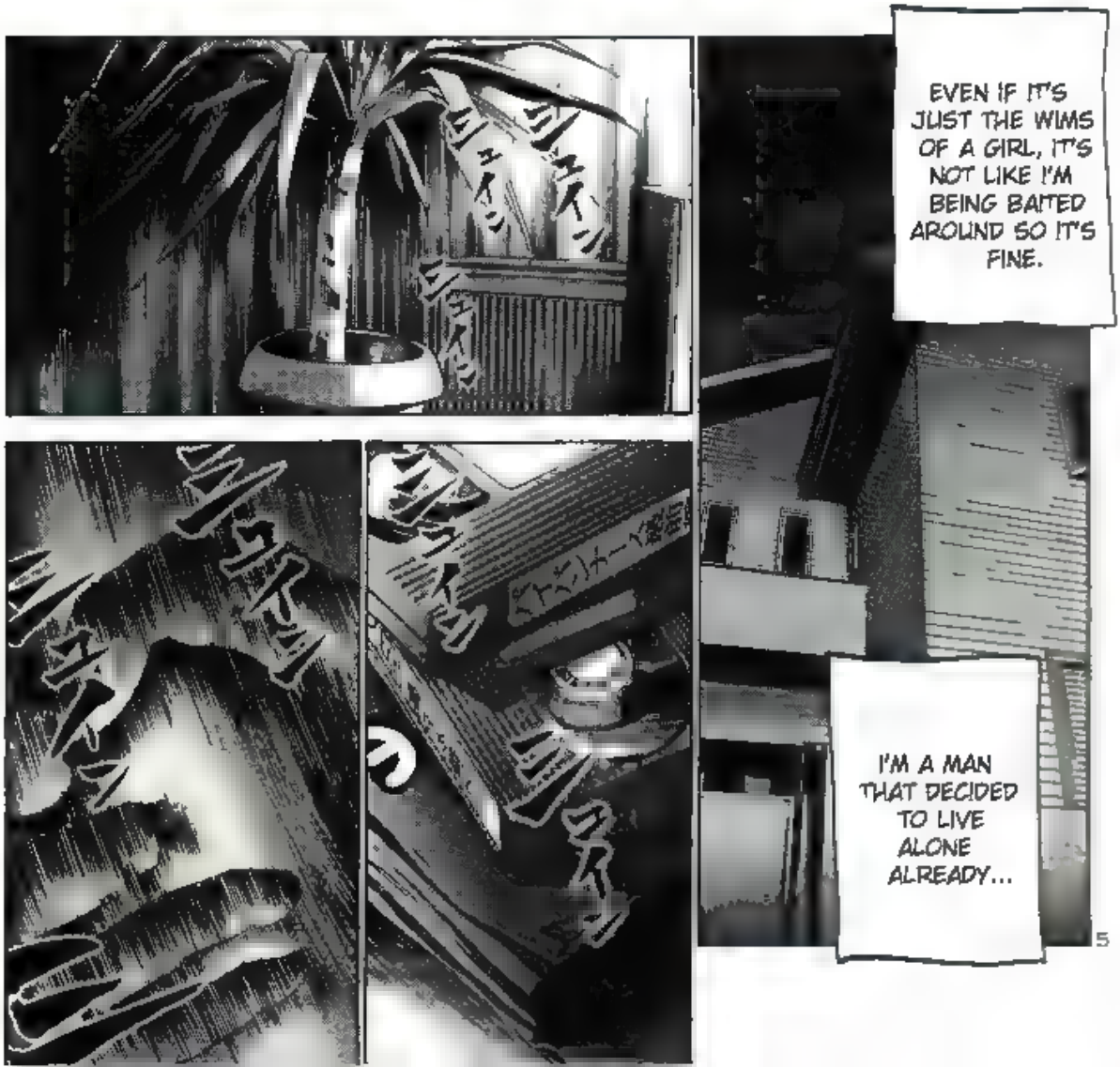
I'M HOME.

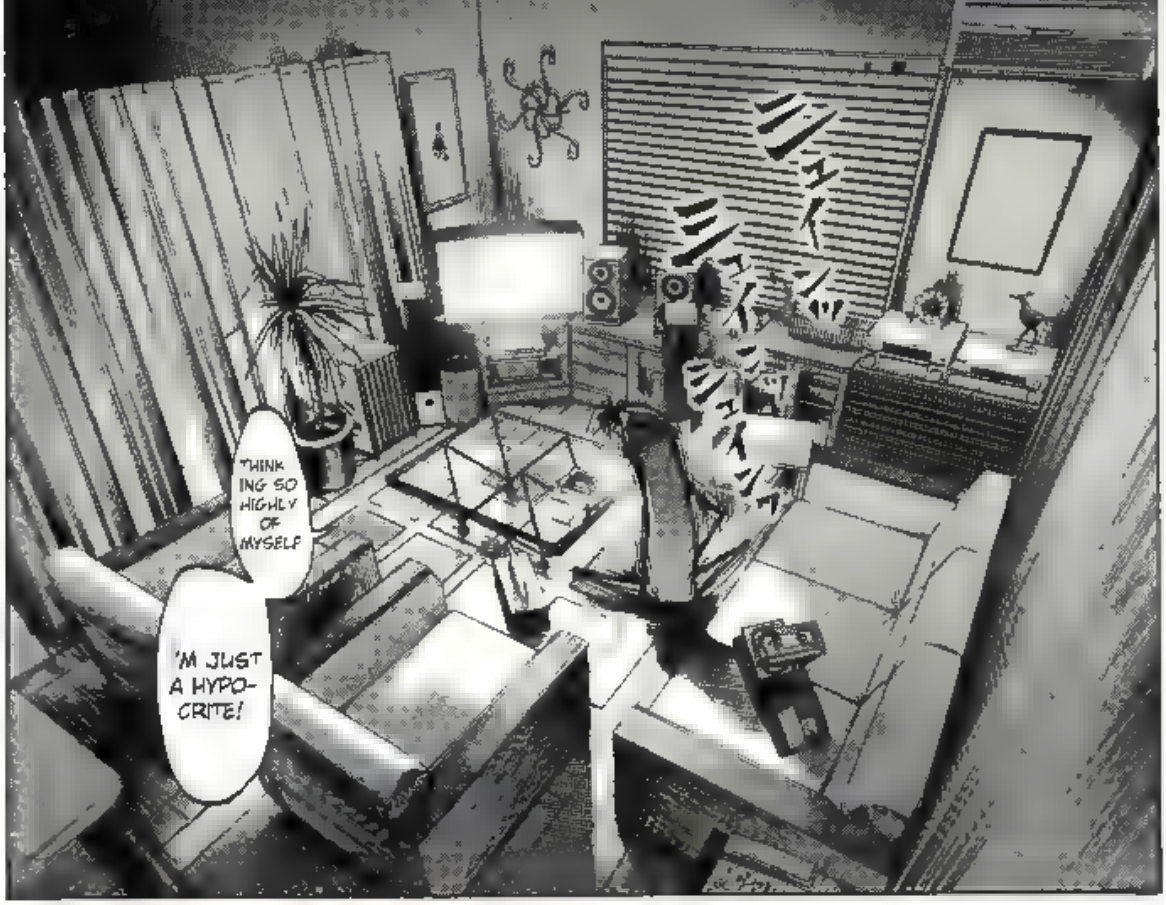
ARMPIT HAIR...

DIE!!

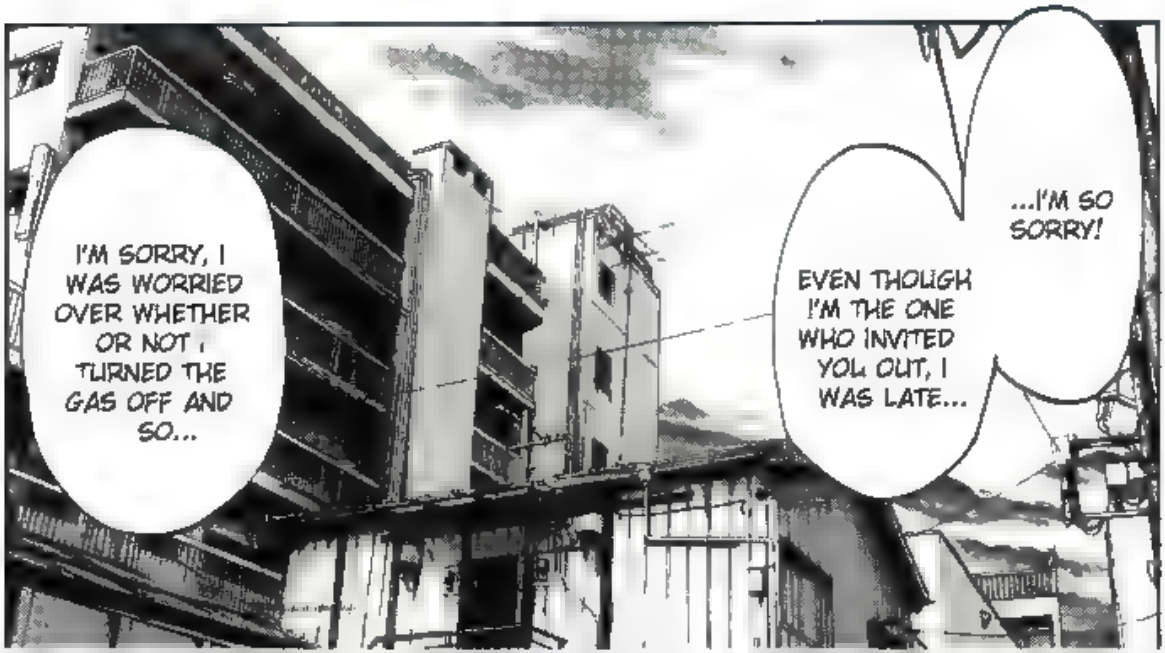

COME ON NOW, SISTER. IF YOU SLEEP HERE LIKE THIS, YOU'LL CATCH A COLD.
...HUH? OH, IT'S YOU. WHY ARE YOU SO NICE TODAY. .
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I'M ALWAYS NICE.
.. MMM, IS THAT SO... OK THEN...
PUNPUN!!
I BOUGHT SOME CHOCOPIES SO I PUT THEM IN YOUR ROOM!

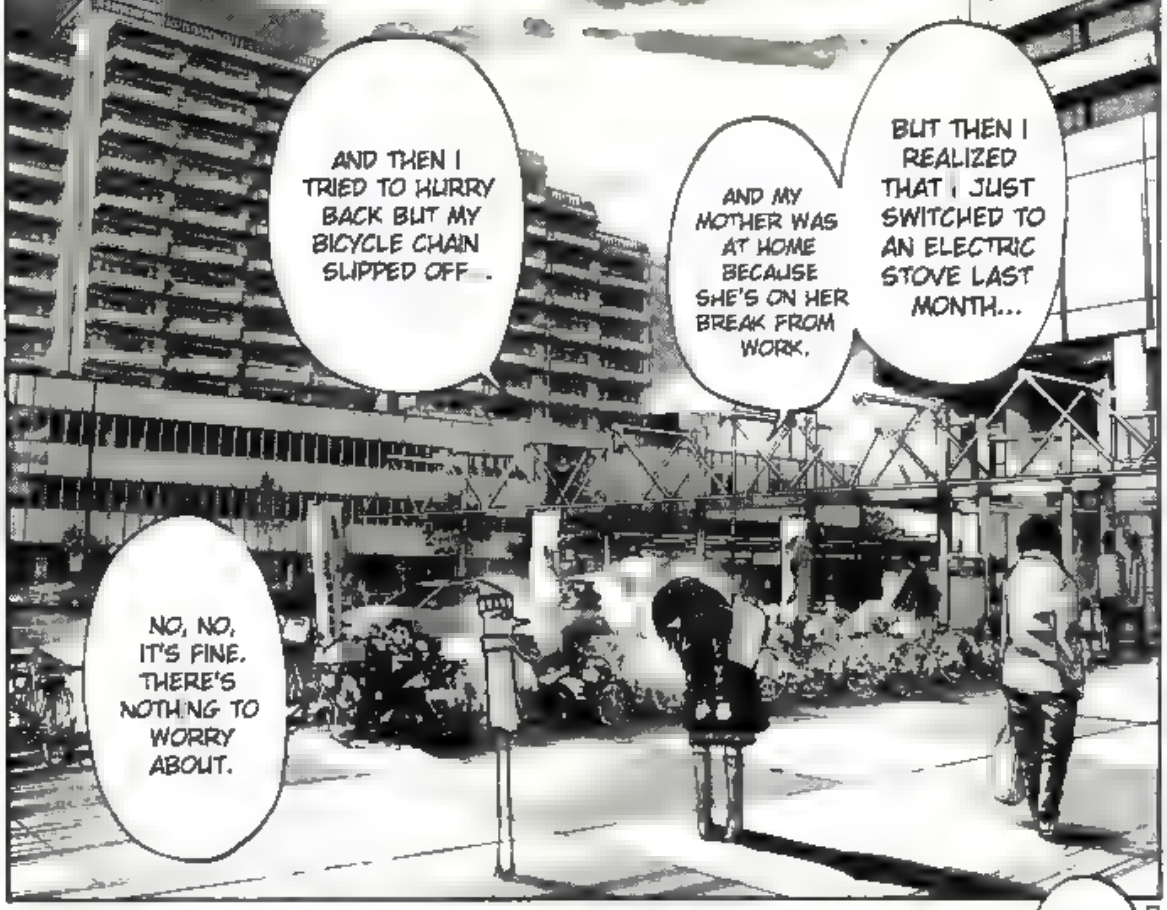
呪呪呪呪
CURSE YOU, CURSE YOU CURSE YOU.
YOU HAVE PRACTICE TOMORROW, RIGHT?
IT'D BE BEST TO GO TO YOUR ROOM AND SLEEP EARLY THEN.

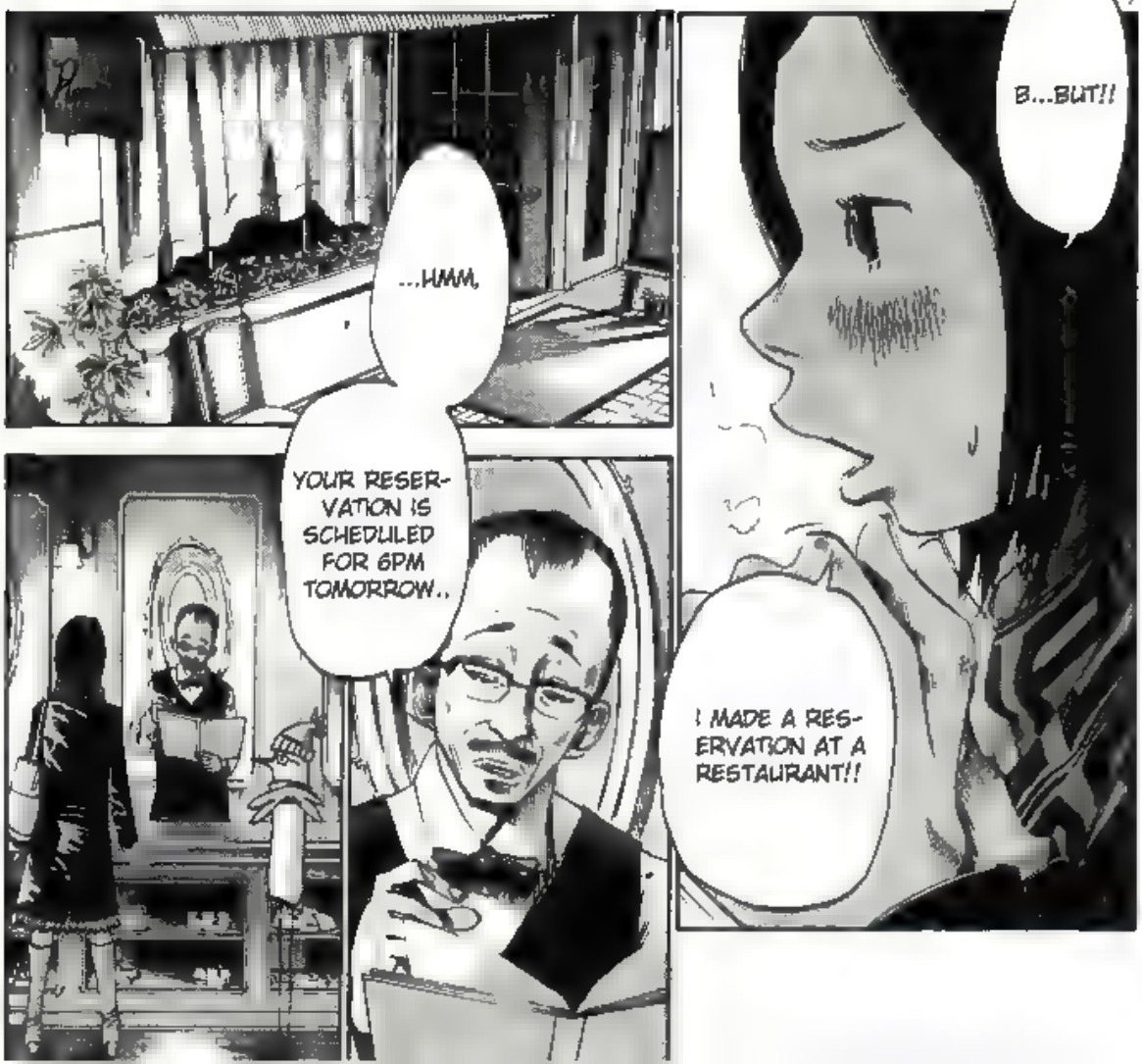

EVEN IF IT'S JUST THE WIMS OF A GIRL, IT'S NOT LIKE I'M BEING BAITED AROUND SO IT'S FINE.
I'M A MAN THAT DECIDED TO LIVE ALONE ALREADY...


THINK ING SO HIGHLY OF MYSELF
'M JUST A HYPO- CRITE!

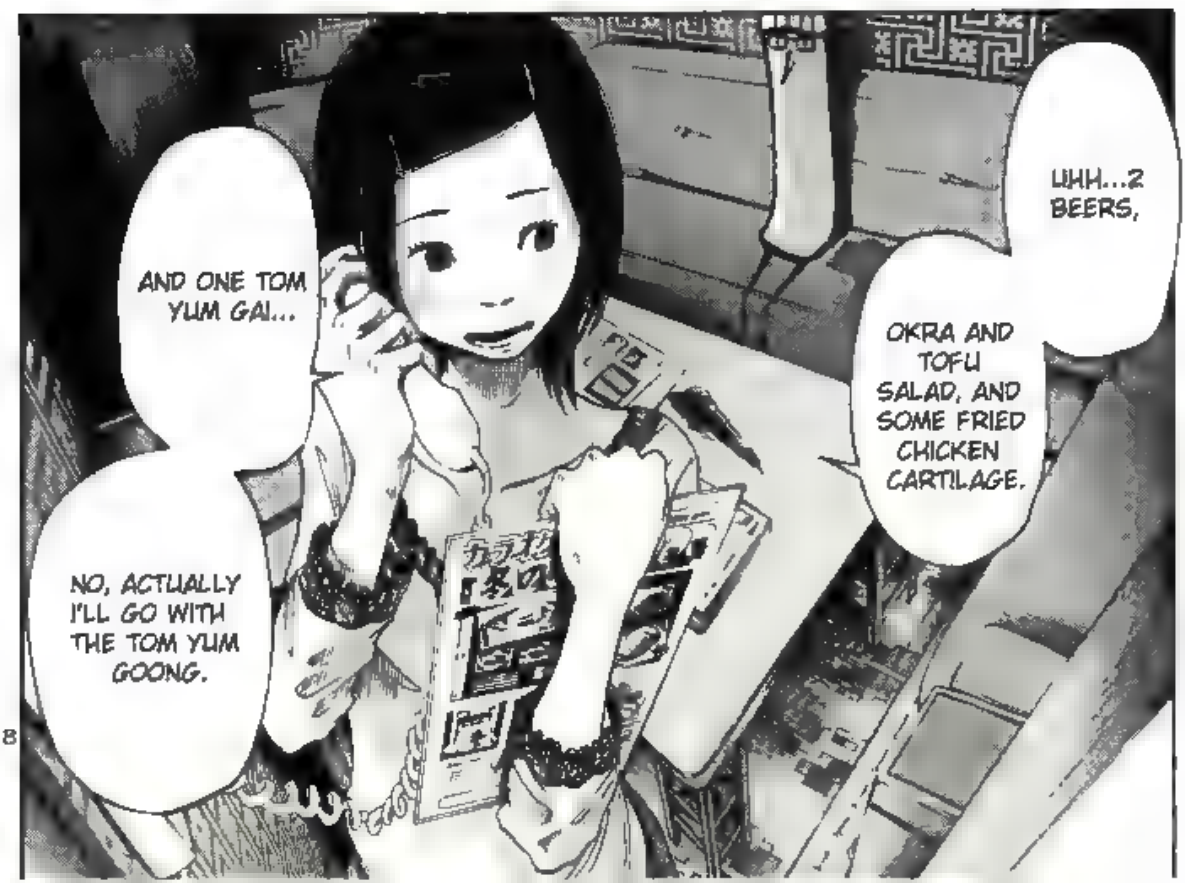
I'M NOT QUALI- FIED TO GO OUT WITH SOMEONE.
...FOR A PERSON LIKE ME.

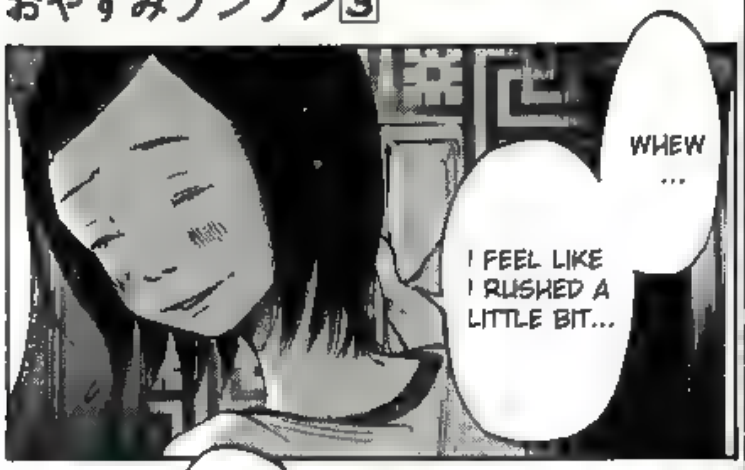

I'M SORRY, I WAS WORRIED OVER WHETHER OR NOT I TURNED THE GAS OFF AND SO...
EVEN THOUGH I'M THE ONE WHO INVITED YOU OUT, I WAS LATE...
...I'M SO SORRY!


AND THEN I TRIED TO HURRY BACK BUT MY BICYCLE CHAIN SLIPPED OFF...
AND MY MOTHER WAS AT HOME BECAUSE SHE'S ON HER BREAK FROM WORK.
BUT THEN I REALIZED THAT I JUST SWITCHED TO AN ELECTRIC STOVE LAST MONTH...
NO, NO, IT'S FINE. THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.


...HMM,
YOUR RESERVATION IS SCHEDULED FOR 6PM TOMORROW..
B...BUT!!
I MADE A RESERVATION AT A RESTAURANT!!

I'M SO SORRY!!
UGH...
I'M SORRY, I NEVER THOUGHT .
IT'S FINE, IT'S FINE.
カラオケ銀河
...YOU KNOW, I'D BE FINE WITH JUST KARAOKE.


UHH...2 BEERS,
AND ONE TOM YUM GAI...
OKRA AND TOFU SALAD, AND SOME FRIED CHICKEN CARTILAGE.
NO, ACTUALLY I'LL GO WITH THE TOM YUM GOONG.


WHEW ...
I FEEL LIKE I RUSHED A LITTLE BIT...

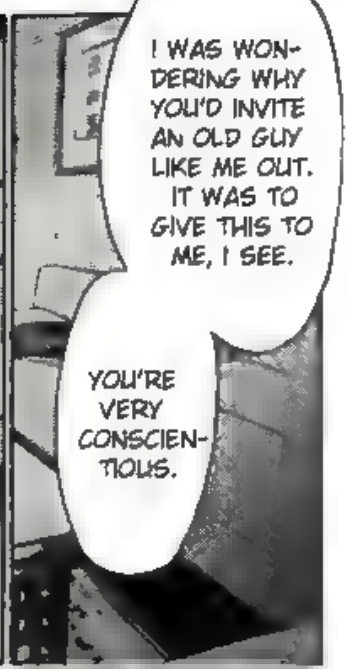
GO WITH THE TOM YUM GOONG...
...YES THAT WILL BE ALL!

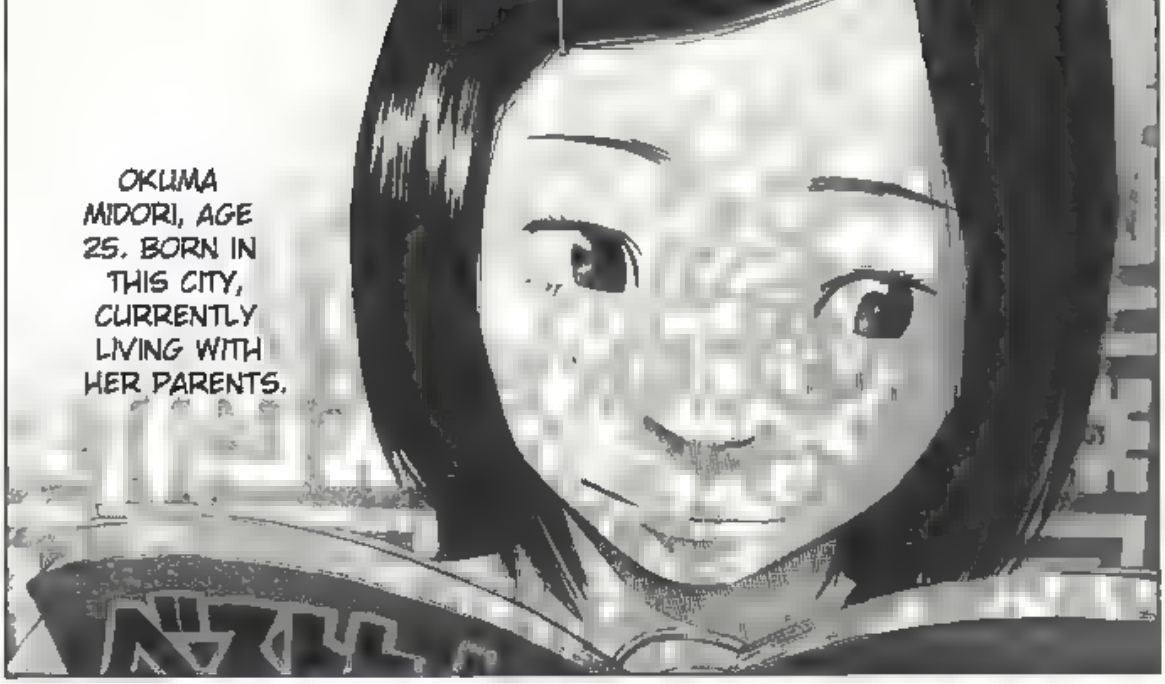
OH AND BEFORE I FORGET...
HERE. IT'S TO MAKE UP FOR YOUR NOTEBOOK THAT I RUINED.

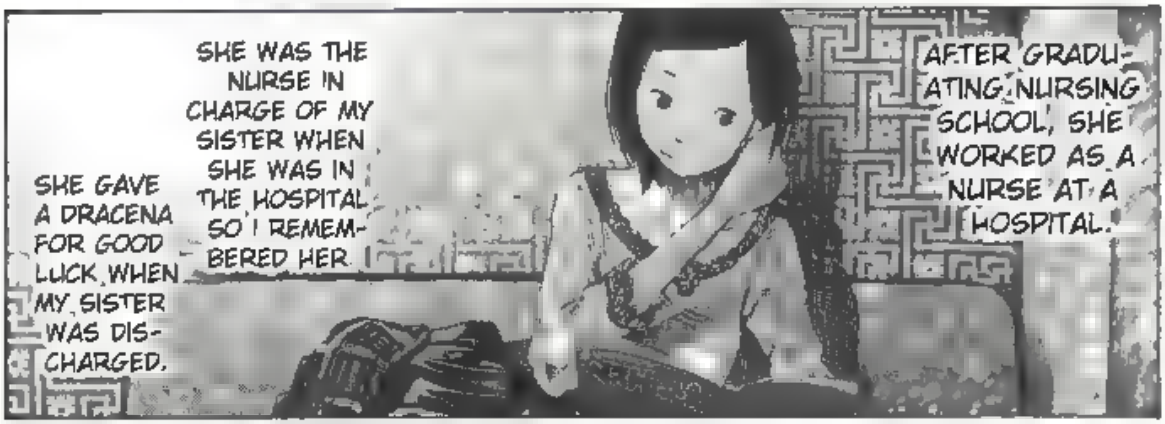
HERE ARE YOUR ORDERS!

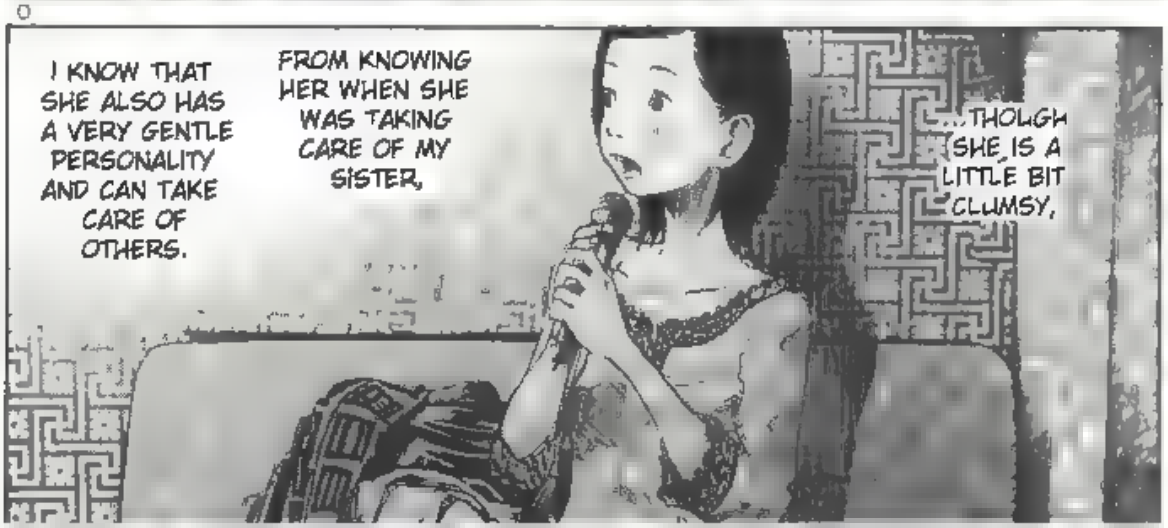
AH...
I SEE.

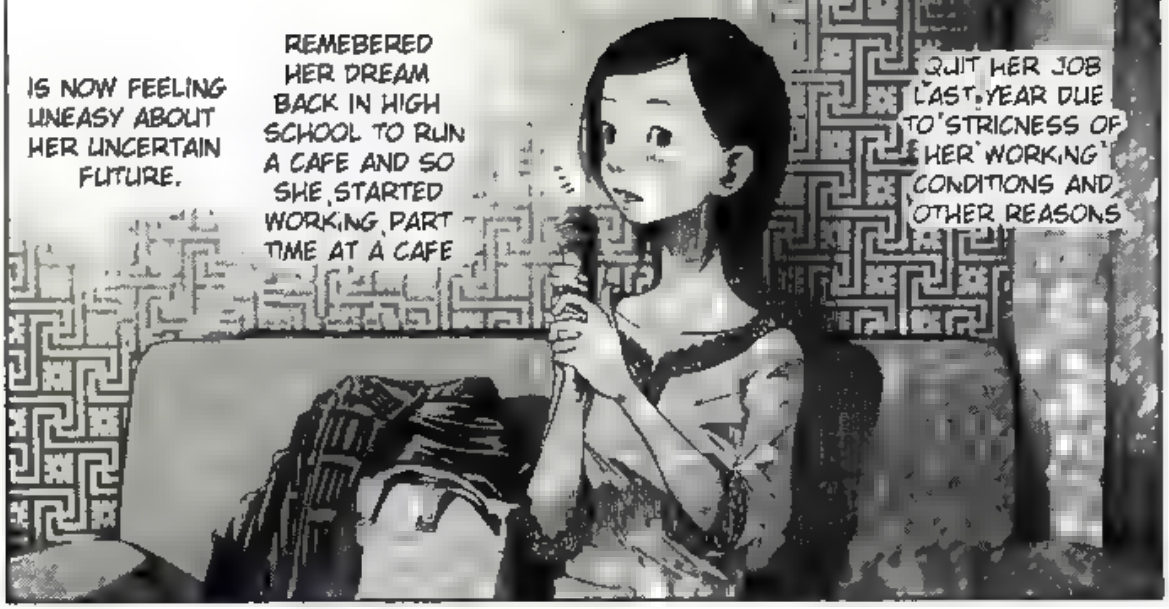
AH, NOT IT'S NOT QUITE LIKE THAT...
WELL, I DID ALSO WANT TO MAKE IT UP BUT...


I WAS WONDERING WHY YOU'D INVITE AN OLD GUY LIKE ME OUT. IT WAS TO GIVE THIS TO ME, I SEE.
YOU'RE VERY CONSCIENTIOUS.

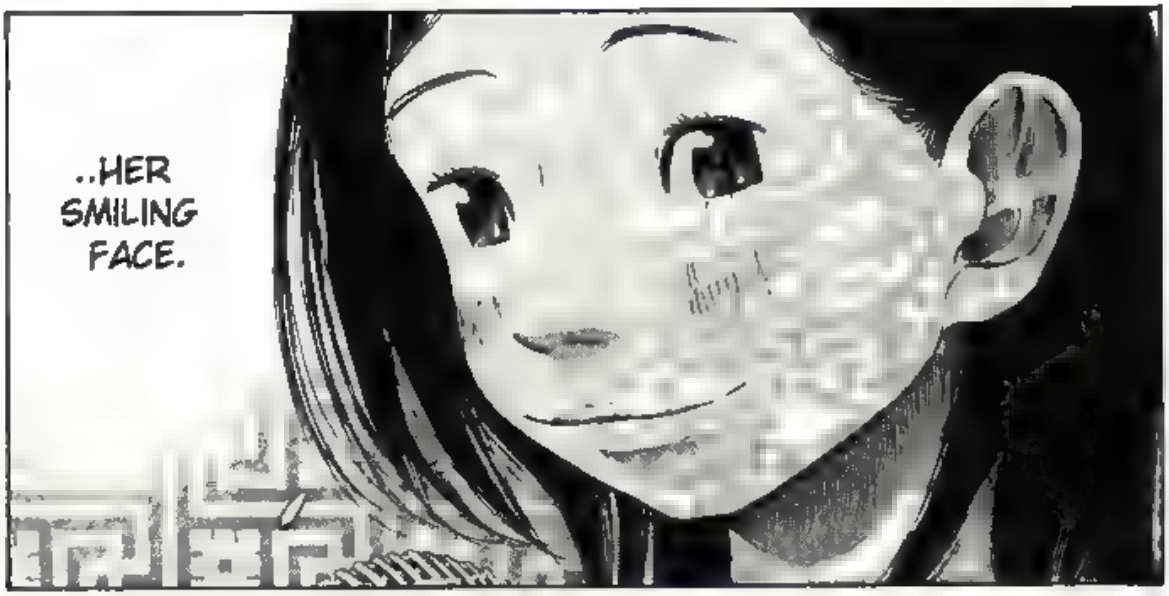

OKUMA MIDORI, AGE 25. BORN IN THIS CITY, CURRENTLY LIVING WITH HER PARENTS.


SHE GAVE A DRACENA FOR GOOD LUCK WHEN MY SISTER WAS DISCHARGED.
SHE WAS THE NURSE IN CHARGE OF MY SISTER WHEN SHE WAS IN THE HOSPITAL SO I REMEMBERED HER.
AFTER GRADUATING NURSING SCHOOL, SHE WORKED AS A NURSE AT A HOSPITAL.


I KNOW THAT SHE ALSO HAS A VERY GENTLE PERSONALITY AND CAN TAKE CARE OF OTHERS.
FROM KNOWING HER WHEN SHE WAS TAKING CARE OF MY SISTER,
...THOUGH SHE IS A LITTLE BIT CLUMSY,


IS NOW FEELING UNEASY ABOUT HER UNCERTAIN FUTURE.
REMEBERED HER DREAM BACK IN HIGH SCHOOL TO RUN A CAFE AND SO SHE STARTED WORKING PART TIME AT A CAFE
QUIT HER JOB LAST YEAR DUE TO STRICNESS OF HER WORKING CONDITIONS AND OTHER REASONS

AND A VERY HONEST AND KIND GIR..
..VERY MID-TWEN-TIES-LIKE.


..HER SMILING FACE.

WHAT'S YOUR OBJECTIVE!!

AH, MY BAD.
I'M SORRY I'VE BEEN DOING ALL THE SINGING COULD IT PERHAPS BE BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT VERY GOOD AT SINGING?
UMM...

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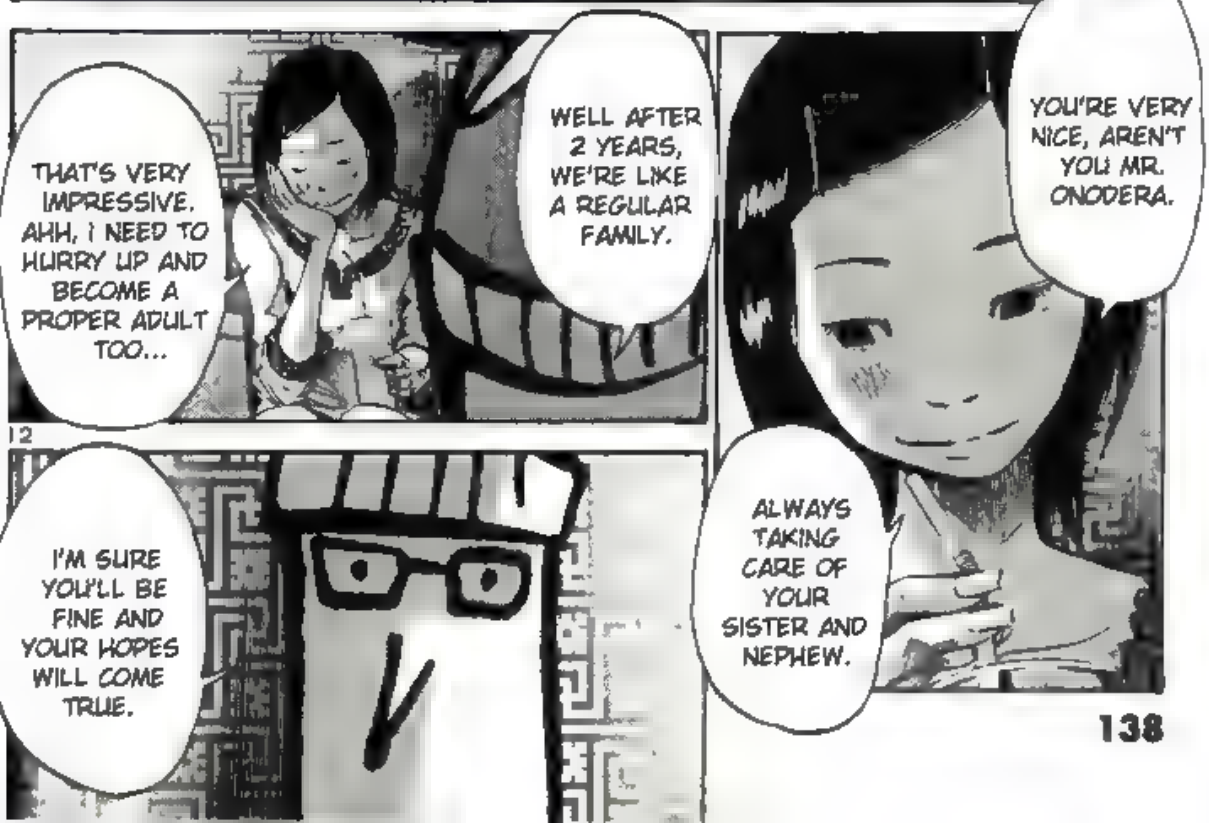
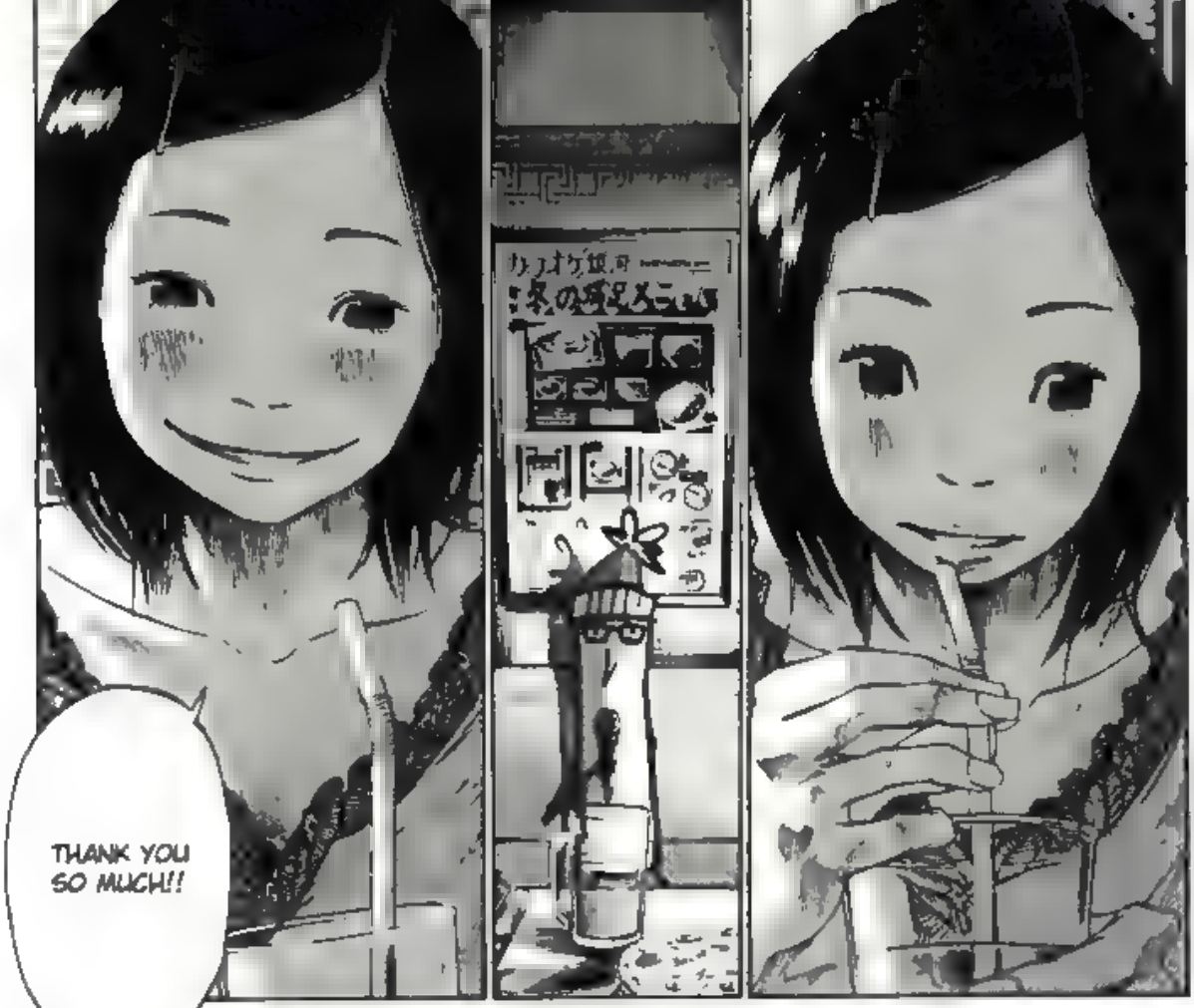
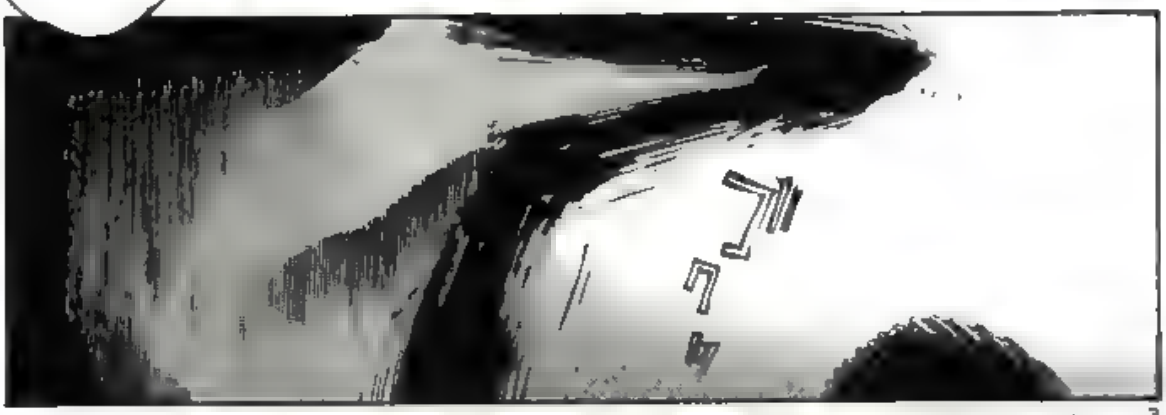

THAT'S VERY IMPRESSIVE. AHH, I NEED TO HURRY UP AND BECOME A PROPER ADULT TOO...
WELL AFTER 2 YEARS, WE'RE LIKE A REGULAR FAMILY.
YOU'RE VERY NICE, AREN'T YOU MR. ONODERA.
I'M SURE YOU'LL BE FINE AND YOUR HOPES WILL COME TRUE.
ALWAYS TAKING CARE OF YOUR SISTER AND NEPHEW.


THANK YOU SO MUCH!!



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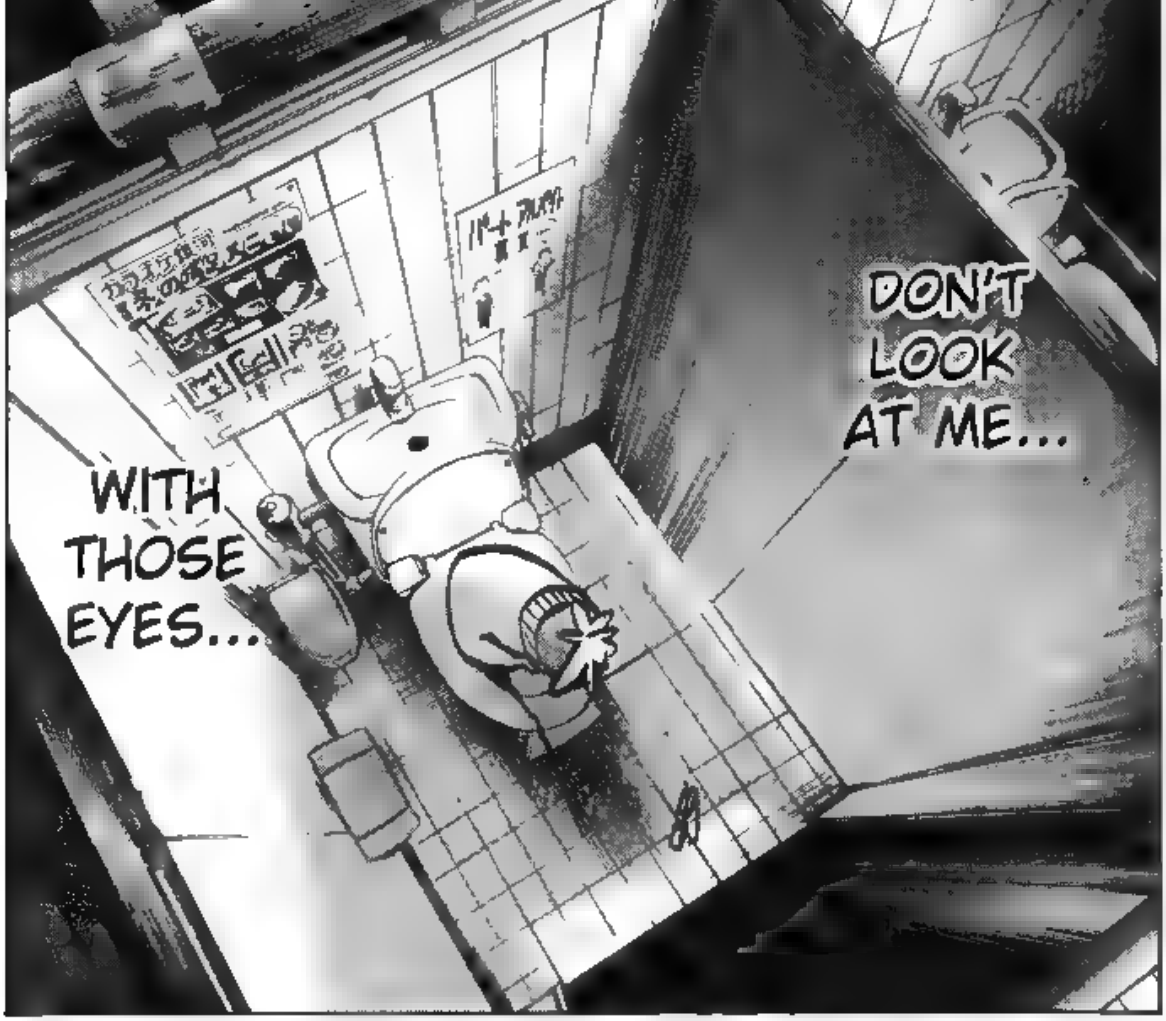
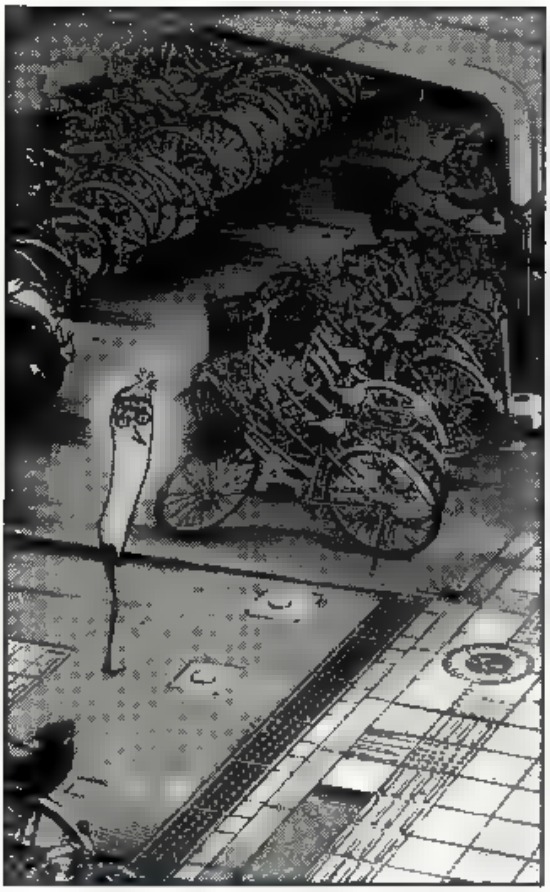
HOWEVER
GLAY
AH...
BUT YOU'RE SONG'S GOING TO START...
SORRY.
I HAVE TO GO THE WASHROOM.


DON'T LOOK AT ME...
WITH THOSE EYES...

I REALIZE HOW DISGUSTING I AM VERY WELL...
EVEN IF YOU DON'T LOOK AT ME WITH SUCH PURE LOVELY EYES...

DON'T FORGET ABOUT YOUR REGRET FROM THAT TIME!!
WHAT MEANING DO YOU THIK YOUR FACADE OF KINDNESS WILL HAVE?
I FEEL DISGUSTED AT MYSELF.
LET'S GO HOME.



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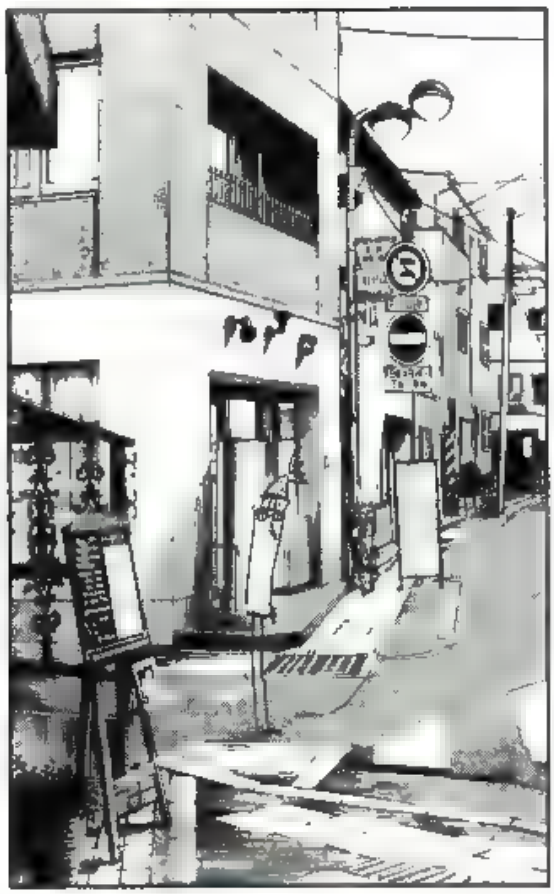
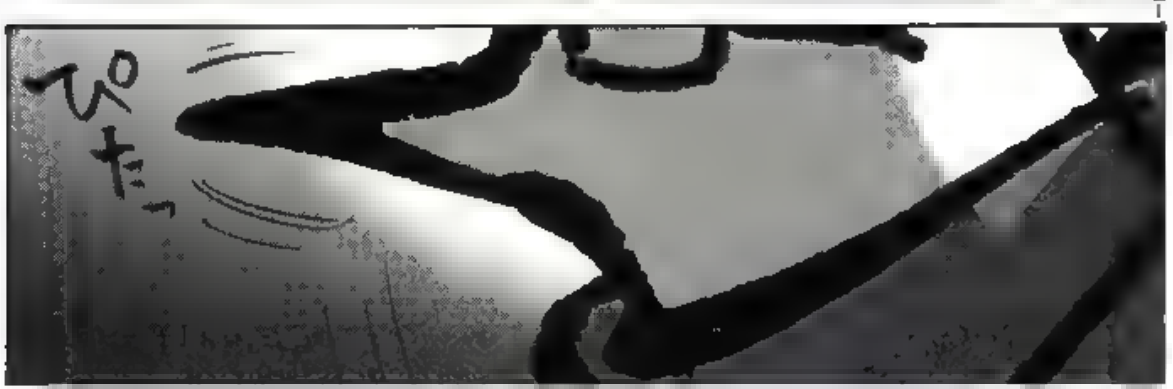


MR. ONODERA!!
P-PLEASE WAIT A MINUTE!!

WHY ARE YOU RETURNING HOME SO SUDDENLY?
DID I SAY SOMETHING RUDE!?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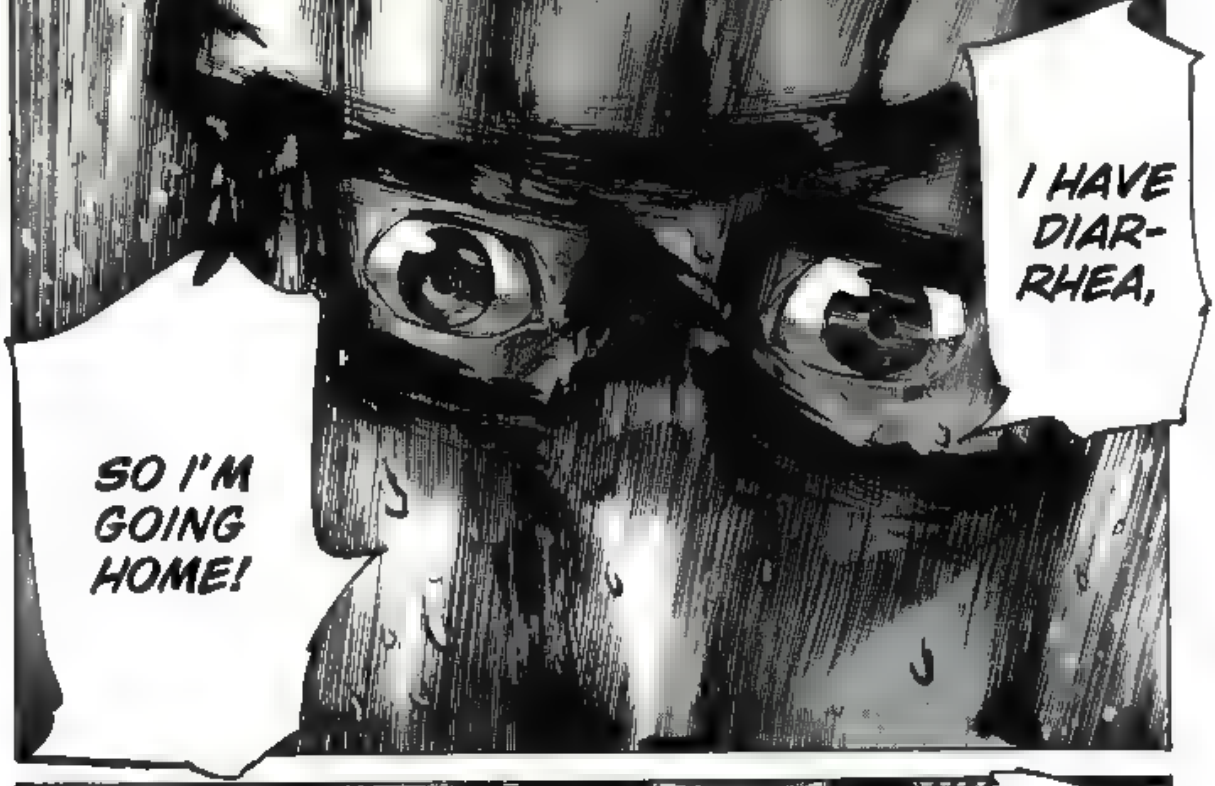
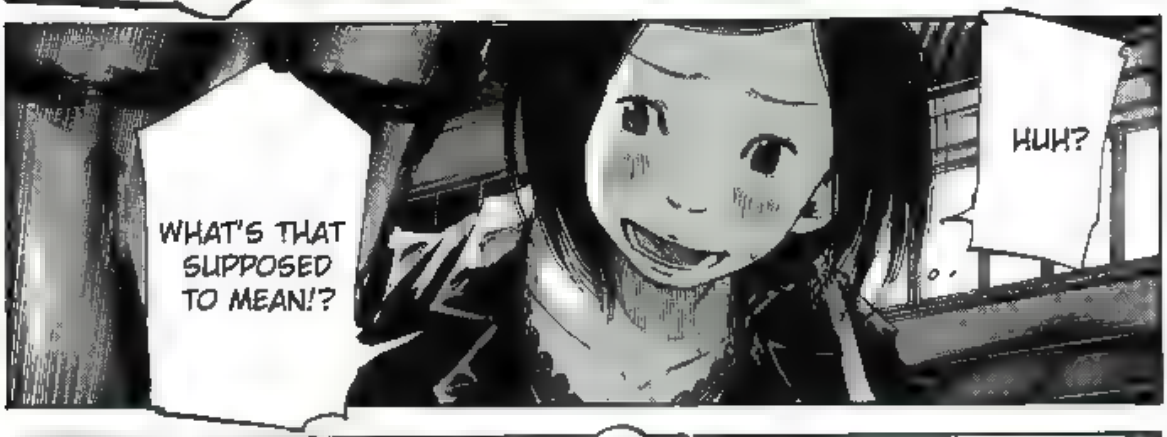
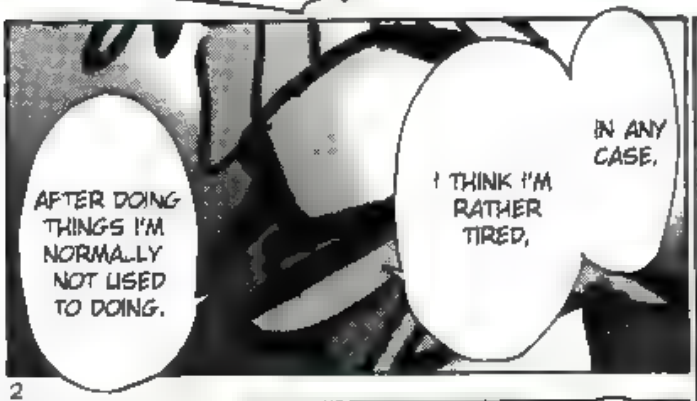
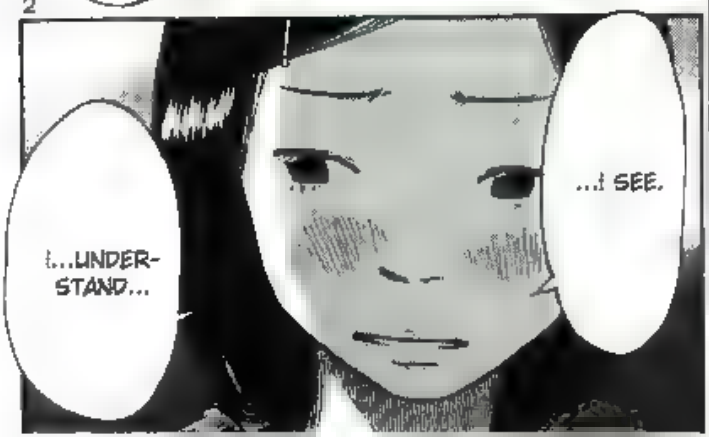
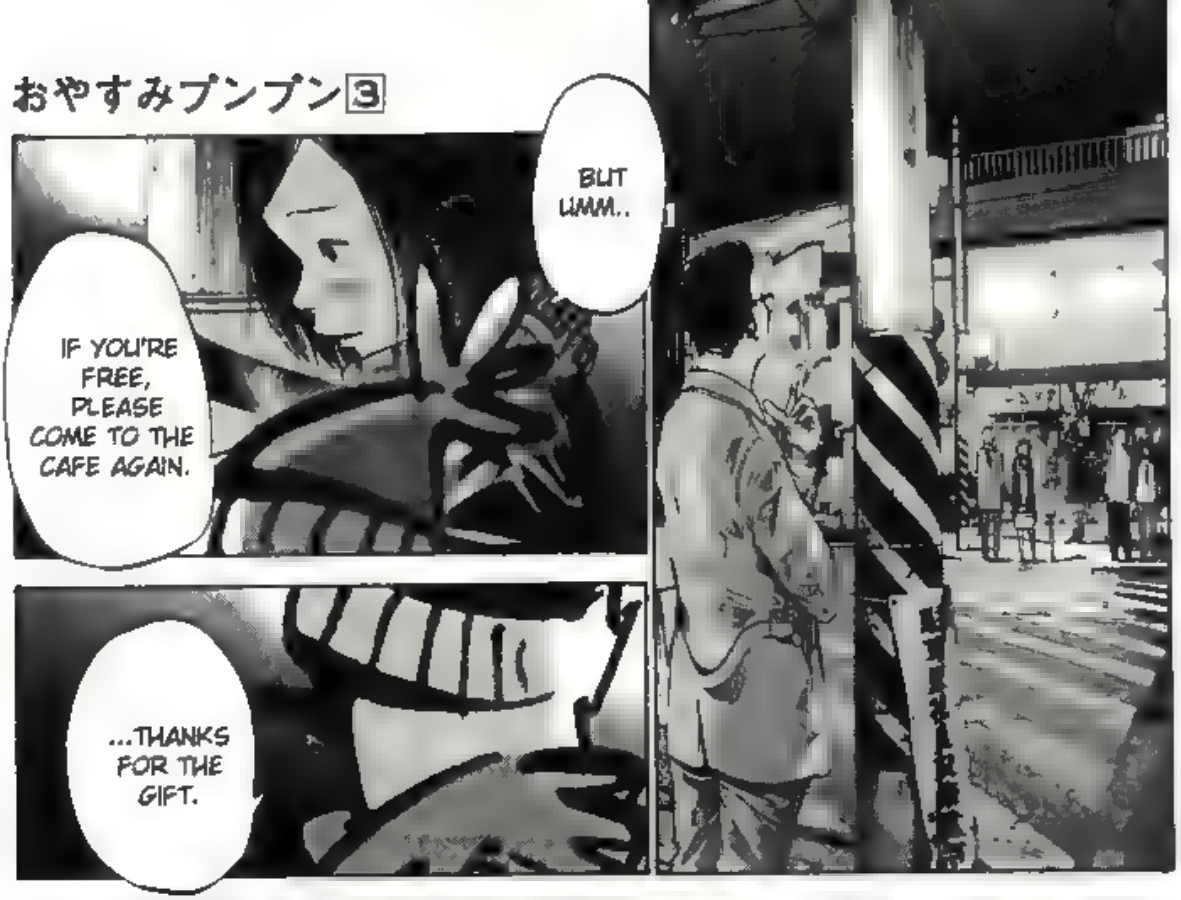
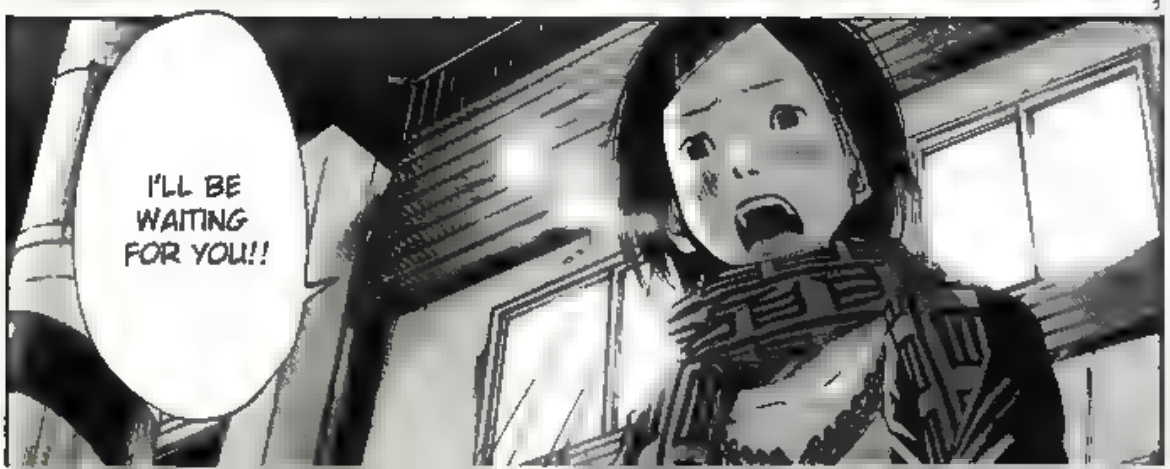

I HAVE DIAR-RHEA,
SO I'M GOING HOME!


HUH?
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN!?

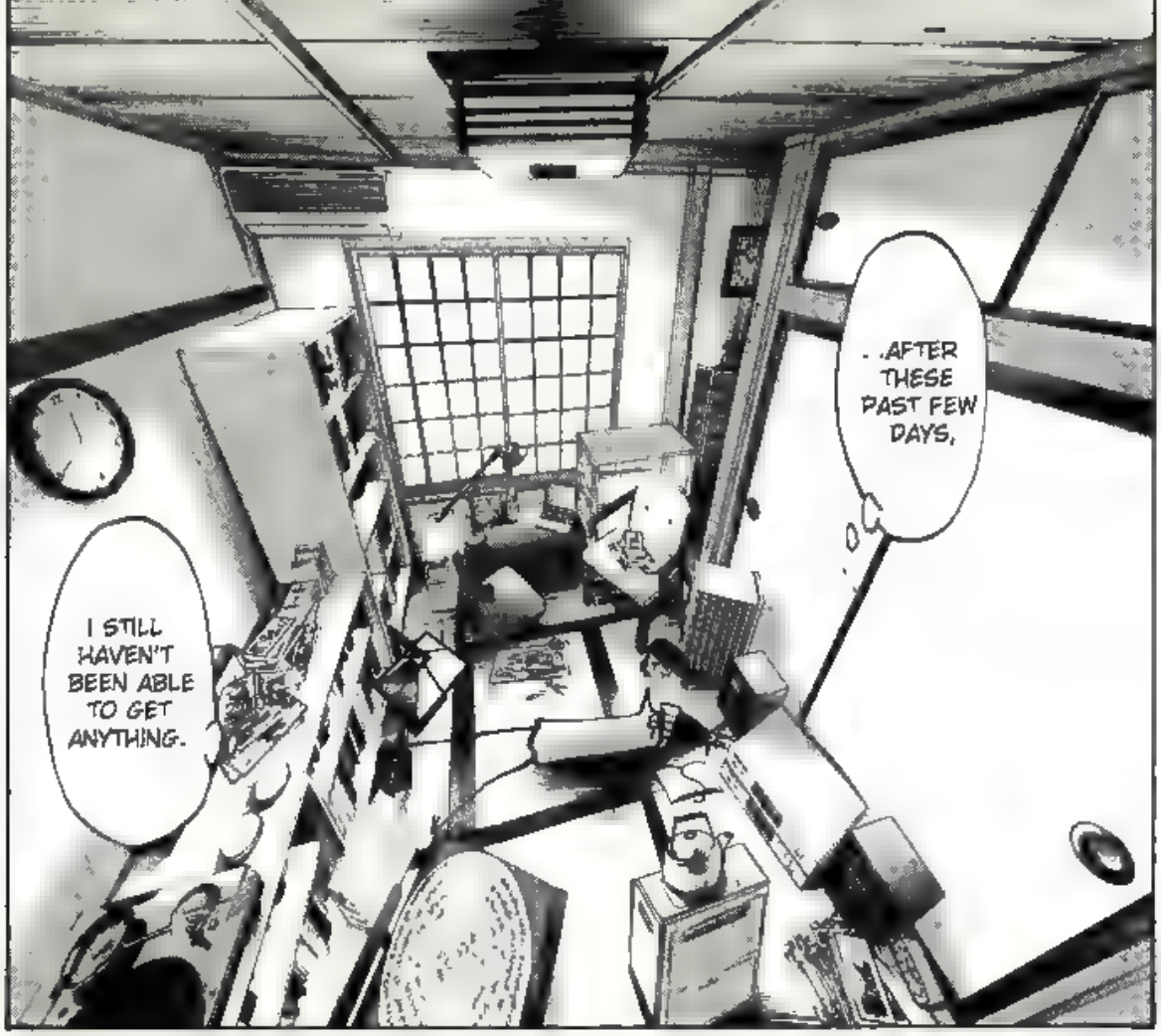

IN ANY CASE,
I THINK I'M RATHER TIRED,
AFTER DOING THINGS I'M NORMALLY NOT USED TO DOING.


...I SEE.
I...UNDER-STAND...


BUT UMM..
IF YOU'RE FREE, PLEASE COME TO THE CAFE AGAIN.
...THANKS FOR THE GIFT.


I'LL BE WAITING FOR YOU!!

IT'S TIME FOR THE WEATHER REPORT
WE HAVE A COLD FRONT MOVING INTO THE MAIN-LAND...
AND THAT'S ALL FOR NOW WE HOPE YOU HAVE A GOOD WEEKEND!
HEY, YUICHI!
IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S GOING TO SNOW TOMORROW SO GO OUT AND SHOP TODAY!!


. . .AFTER THESE PAST FEW DAYS,
I STILL HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO GET ANYTHING.

SNOW, HUH...

IF IT'S GOING TO SNOW, I'D RATHER HAVE IT SNOW AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.
UNTIL EVERYTHING IS COVERED AND HIDDEN AWAY BY THE SNOW.

BOOKS IWAMA
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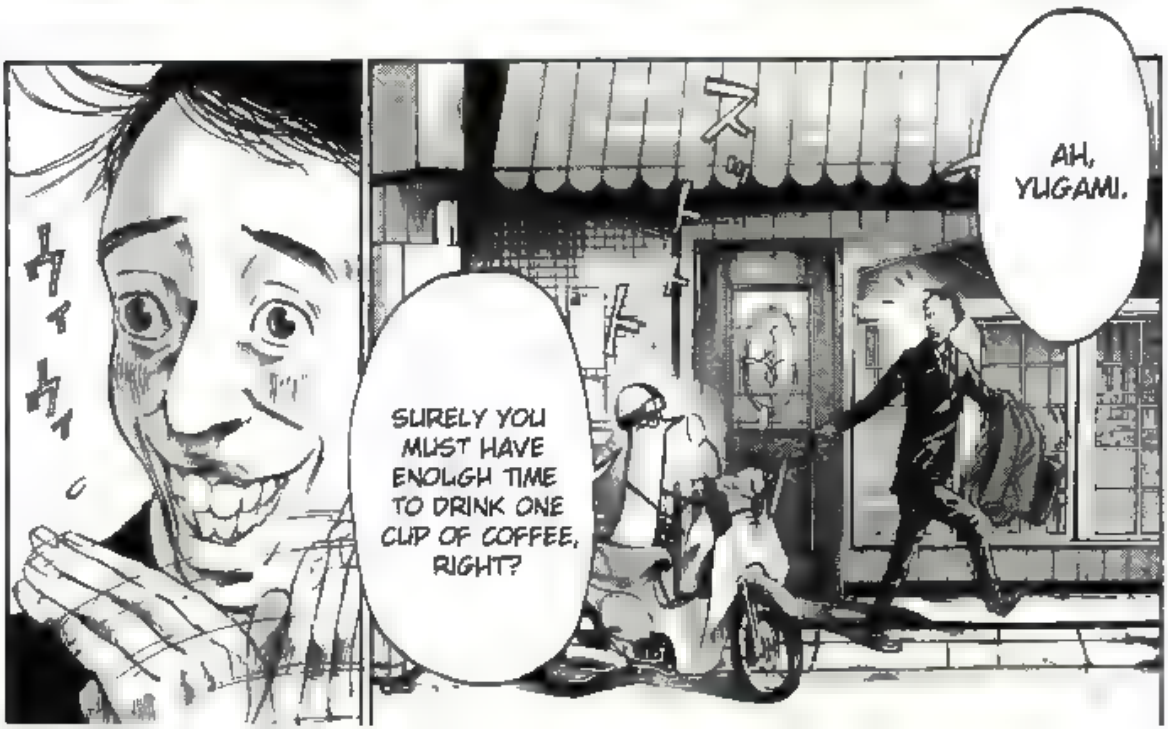
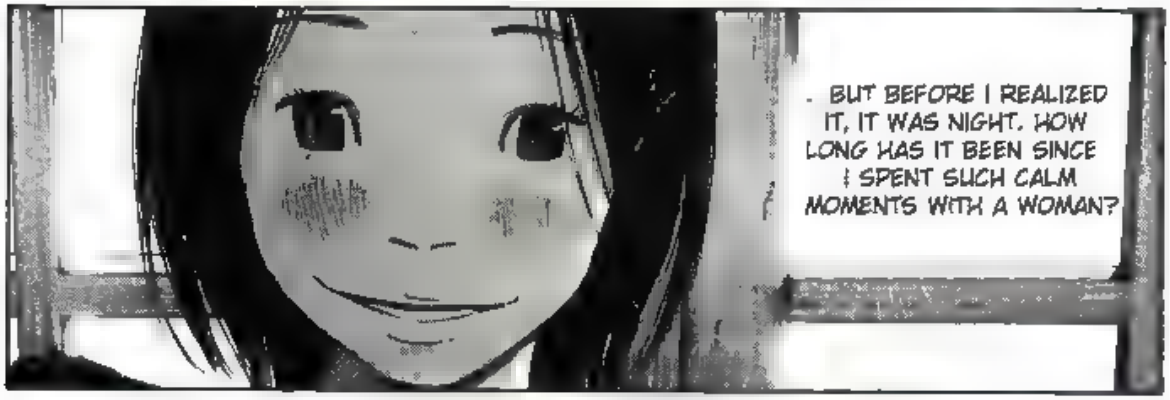

AH, YUGAMI.
SURELY YOU MUST HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO DRINK ONE CUP OF COFFEE, RIGHT?

SORRY SIR, BUT IT'S ALREADY CLOSING TIME AND...
WORKING TOO MUCH ISN'T GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH, YOU KNOW?
AGAIN? WHAT A STRANGE FELLOW.

I'LL COME ANOTHER TIME THEN.
AH, EXCUSE ME THEN.
...AH,
PLEASE, TAKE A SEAT!!
AH, NO! IT'S FINE, COMPLETELY FINE!!
THE MANAGER LEFT EARLY ON URGENT BUSI-NESS SO IT'S UP TO ME WHEN TO CLOSE THE SHOP.
MR. ONODERA...

I MERELY PLANNED TO APOLOGIZE FOR THE OTHER DAY AND THEN QUICKLY RETURN HOME.
.....HAD NO HESITATION IN SITTING DOWN ON THE CHAIR.

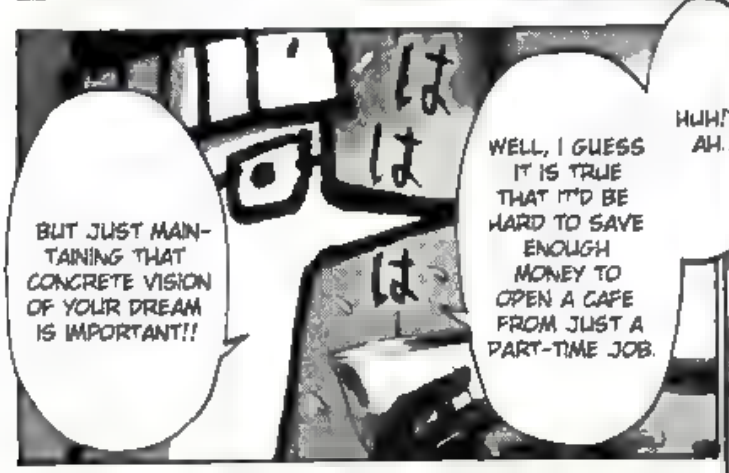

. BUT BEFORE I REALIZED IT, IT WAS NIGHT. HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN SINCE I SPENT SUCH CALM MOMENTS WITH A WOMAN?

"I WANT TO MAKE A SMALL BUT COSY CAFE."
AS I STARED INTENTLY AT THIS GIRL SPEAKING PASSIONATELY OF HER DREAMS,

I...

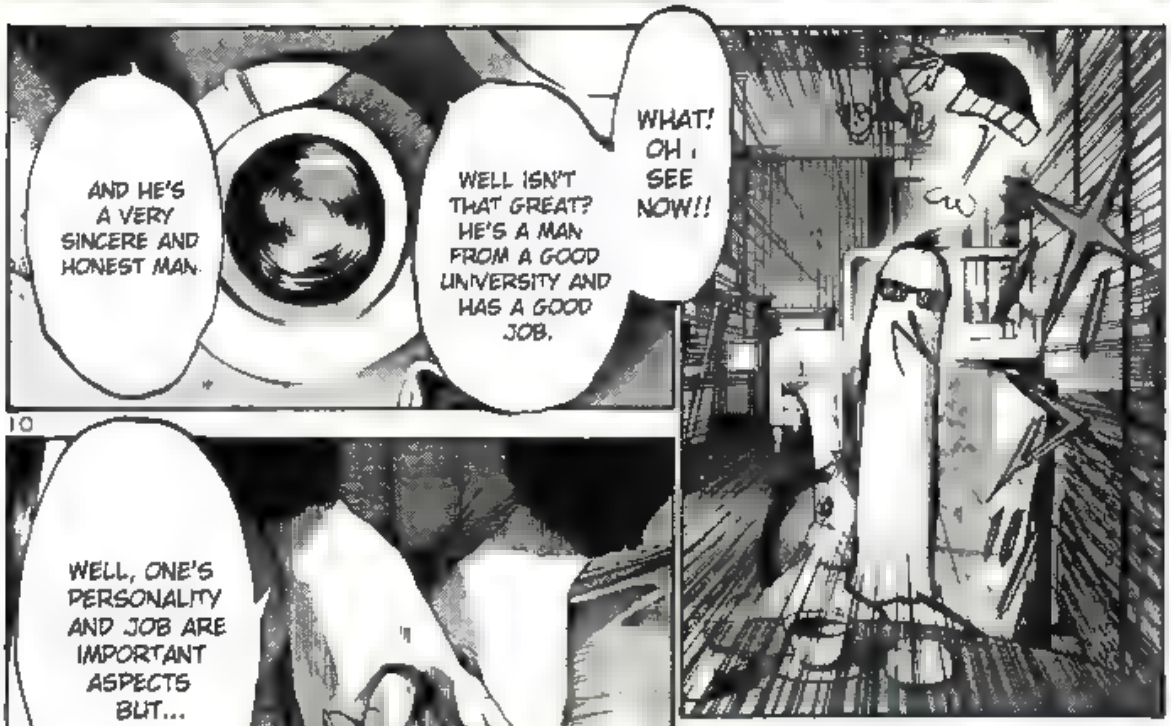
I COULDN'T DENY THAT I LIKED THIS GIRL...!

..BUT,
MAYBE THIS WILL NEVER AMOUNT TO ANYTHING MORE THAN WISHFUL THINKING

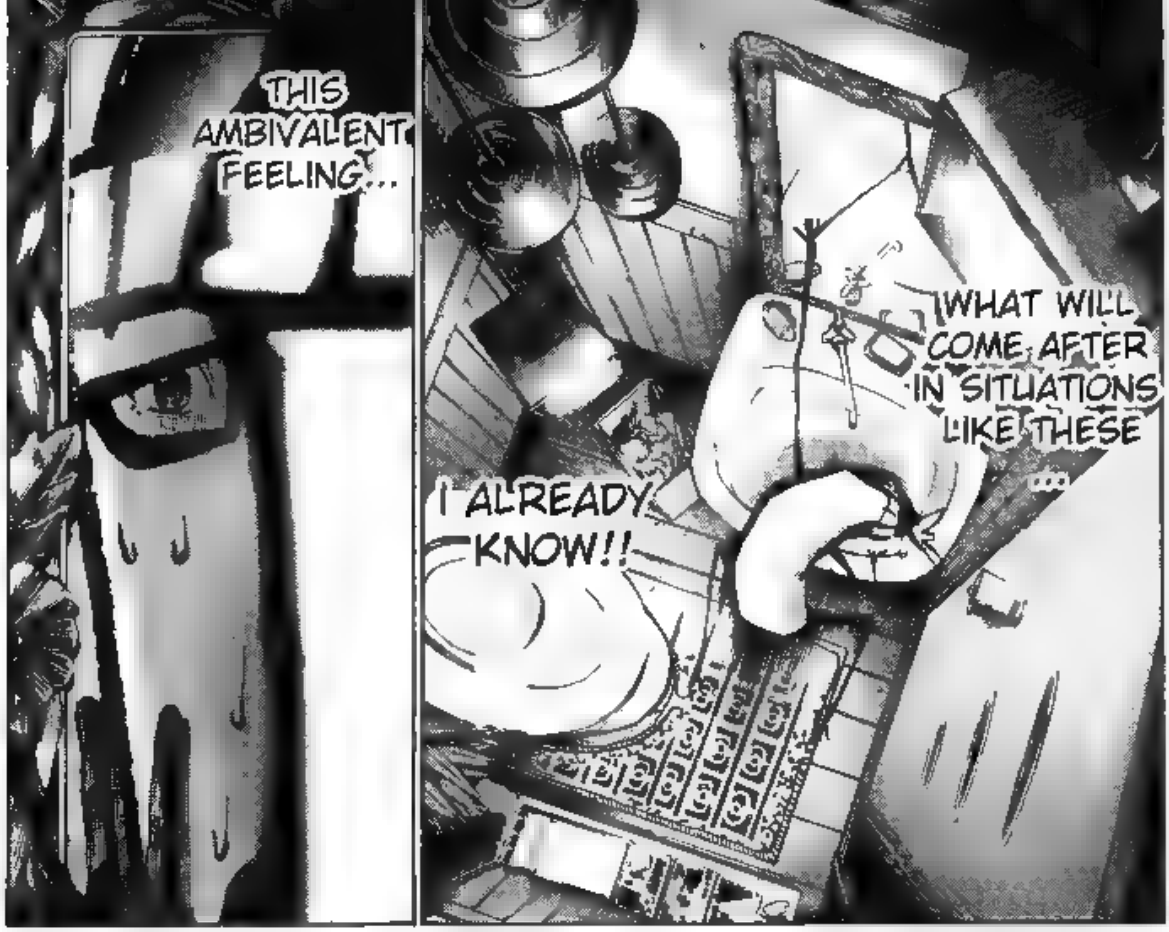

HUH!? AH..
WELL, I GUESS IT IS TRUE THAT IT'D BE HARD TO SAVE ENOUGH MONEY TO OPEN A CAFE FROM JUST A PART-TIME JOB.
BUT JUST MAINTAINING THAT CONCRETE VISION OF YOUR DREAM IS IMPORTANT!!

LATELY, MY PARENTS LOOK AT ME WITH COLD EYES
BECAUSE OF I DON'T HAVE A JOB NOR A MAN.
I KNOW I HAVE TO PULL MYSELF OUT OF THIS SITUATION SOON BUT...

MR.YUGAMI IS ASKING ME OUT AND I'M JUST SO CONFUSED AS TO WHAT TO DO...
WHAT'S MORE IS THAT...
RIGHT NOW...


AND HE'S A VERY SINCERE AND HONEST MAN.
WELL ISN'T THAT GREAT? HE'S A MAN FROM A GOOD UNIVERSITY AND HAS A GOOD JOB.
WHAT! OH, I SEE NOW!!
10
WELL, ONE'S PERSONALITY AND JOB ARE IMPORTANT ASPECTS BUT...

I JUST THINK THAT THERE'S SOMEONE ELSE OUT THERE THAT'S THE ONE FOR ME...
...I ACTUALLY KNOW QUITE A BIT OF PEOPLE.
BUT EVEN SO...
I'VE ONLY EVER ONCE INVITED A MAN OUT FOR DINNER AFTER MEETING HIM JUST ONCE!
I NEED TO GO TO THE WASHROOM!
WAIT!!
UMM. . I...

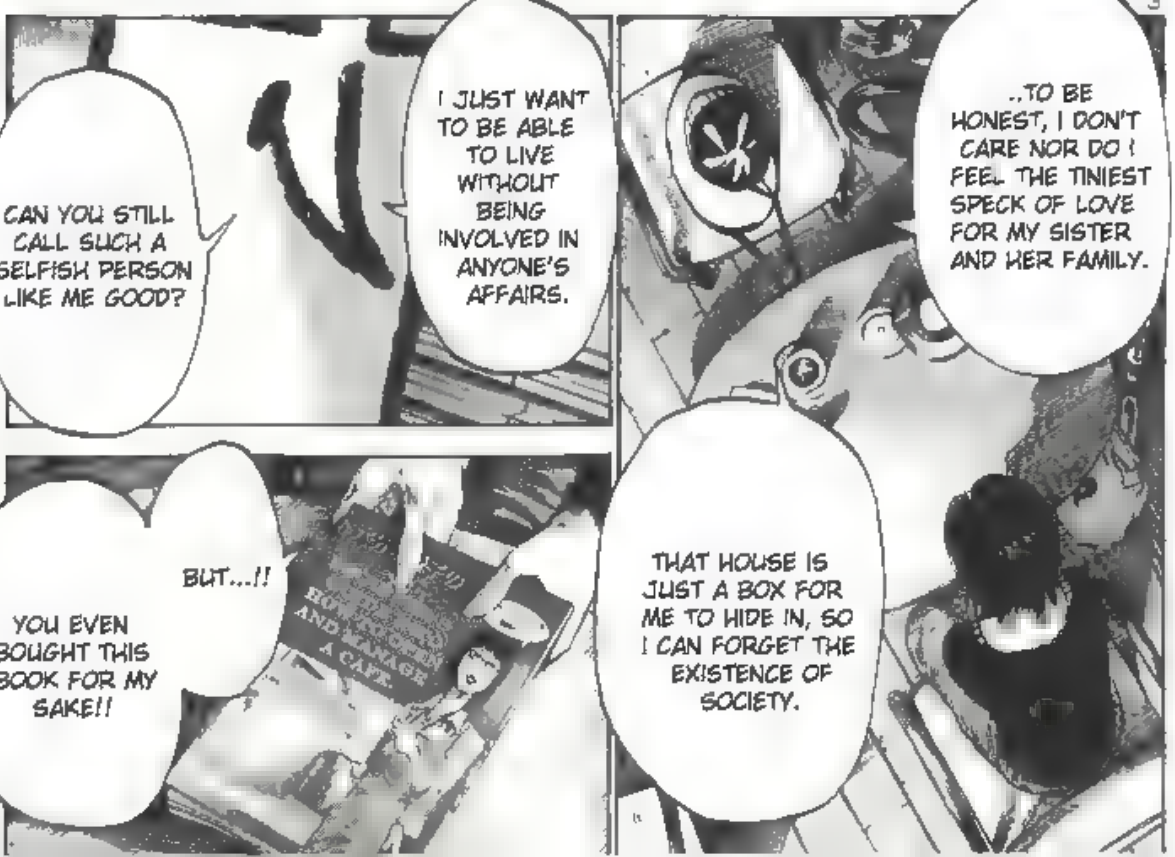

THIS AMBIVALENT FEELING...
I ALREADY KNOW!!
WHAT WILL COME AFTER IN SITUATIONS LIKE THESE...

...WHO IS THIS!? WHO IS THIS VILE CREATURE...!?

..WELL, IT'S LIKE THIS.

I...
I AM HUMAN SCUM. WORSE THAN WHAT YOU COULD EVER IMAGINE.

...WHA,
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING ALL OF A SUDDEN.
YOU'RE TAKING CARE OF YOUR SISTER AND NEPHEW, AREN'T YOU?
I BELIEVE YOU'RE A GOOD PERSON...


..TO BE HONEST, I DON'T CARE NOR DO I FEEL THE TINIEST SPECK OF LOVE FOR MY SISTER AND HER FAMILY.
I JUST WANT TO BE ABLE TO LIVE WITHOUT BEING INVOLVED IN ANYONE'S AFFAIRS.
CAN YOU STILL CALL SUCH A SELFISH PERSON LIKE ME GOOD?
THAT HOUSE IS JUST A BOX FOR ME TO HIDE IN, SO I CAN FORGET THE EXISTENCE OF SOCIETY.
BUT...!!
YOU EVEN BOUGHT THIS BOOK FOR MY SAKE!!

ON THE DAY BEFORE I WENT TO KARAOKE WITH YOU...
I MASTURBATED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 5 YEARS.

WHA..
WHY ARE YOU SAYING THESE THINGS ON PURPOSE!!
MR. ONODERA, DO YOU WANT TO BE HATED BY ME!?

ISN'T THAT JUST TOO MEAN?
YOU'RE TOO UNFAIR.
I'M TRYING TO PUSH MYSELF CLOSER TO YOU BUT YOU JUST KEEP PUSHING ME AWAY. .
JUST WHY...

YOU'RE .. MUCH YOUNGER THAN I AM.
AND I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOUR FUTURE...

I...
I'M ALREADY HURT...

MR. ONODERA.
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN IN THE PAST...?
...I'M SORRY
HOW MUCH WAS THE COFFEE?
...I NEED TO GET GOING.

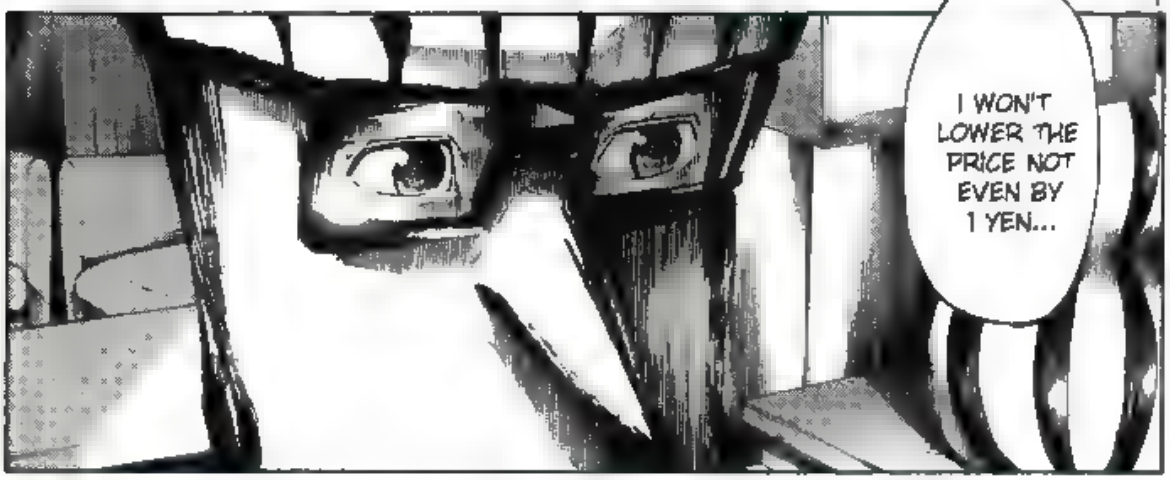
..ONE MILLION YEN

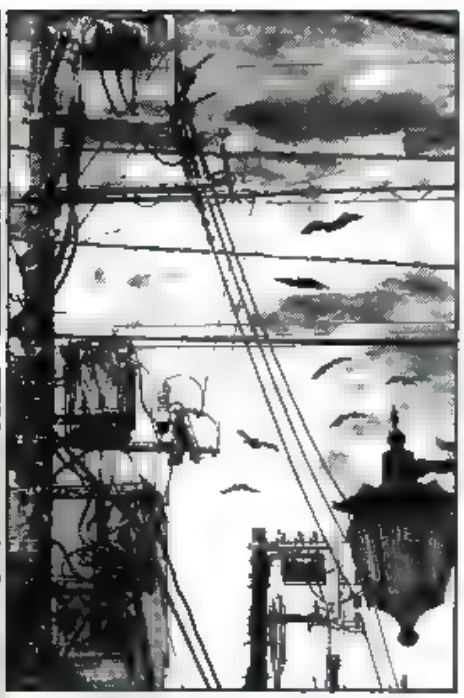
UNTIL YOU TELL ME WHAT HAP-PENED IN THE PAST...
I WON'T LOWER THE PRICE NOT EVEN BY A SINGLE YEN.

SCANLATED BY HOX

第33話

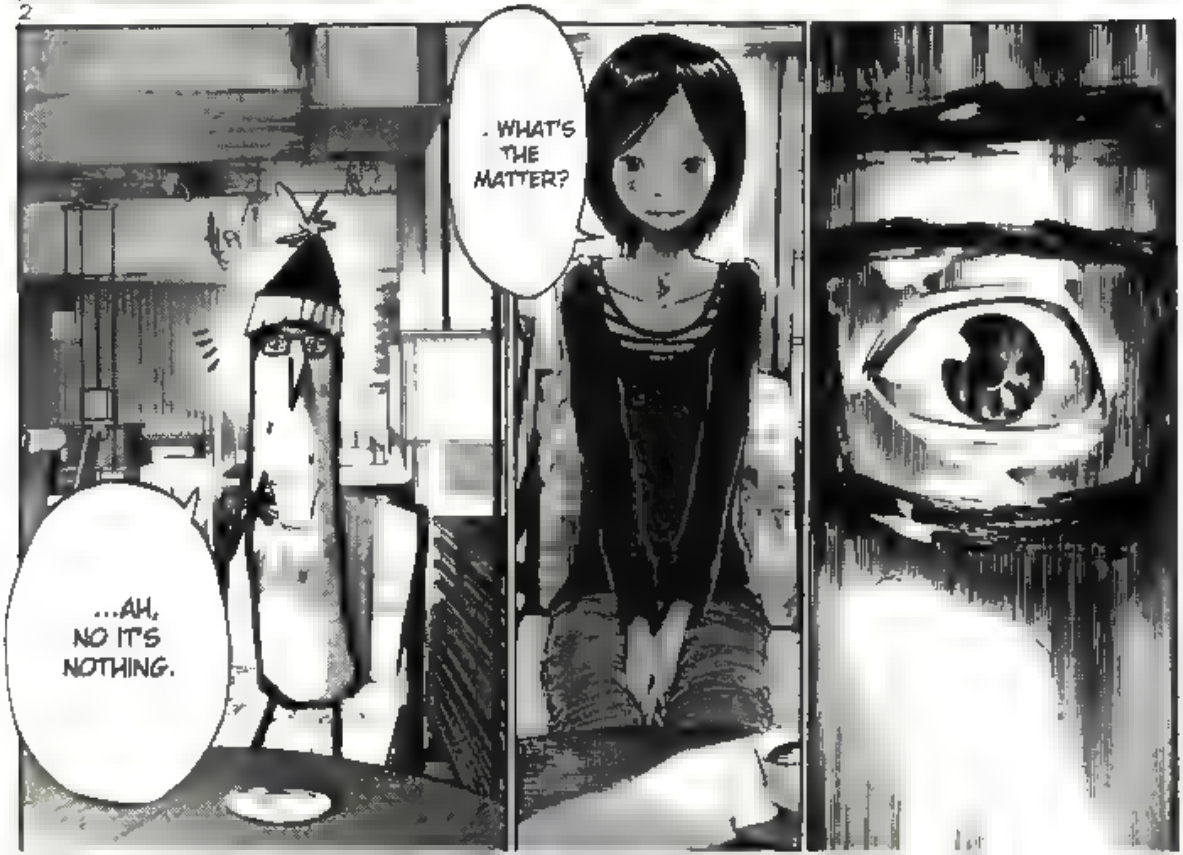
UNLESS YOU TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED IN THE PAST...


I WON'T LOWER THE PRICE NOT EVEN BY 1 YEN...

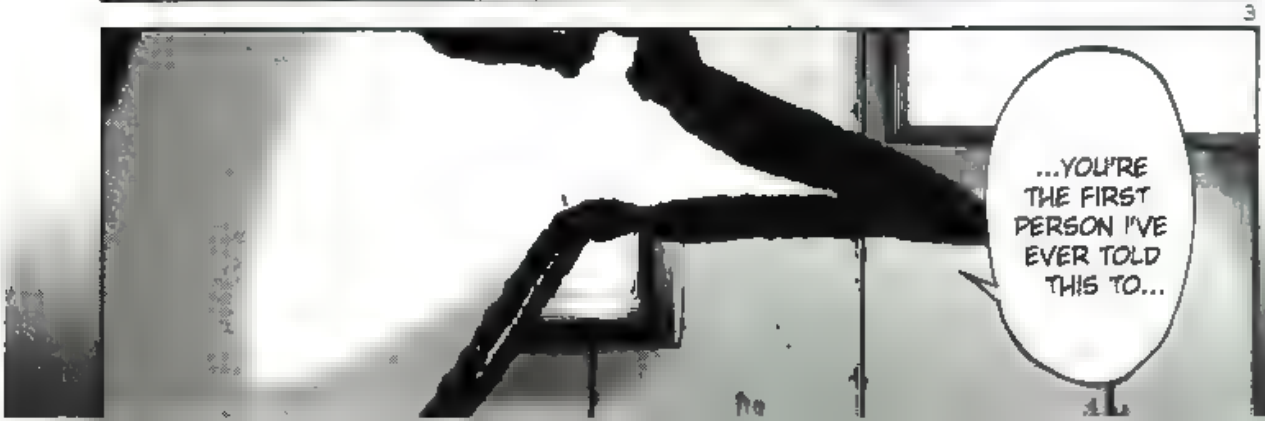


CLOSE

2



...THERE'S PLENTY OF TIME.
SO PLEASE... TELL ME.


...YOU'RE THE FIRST PERSON I'VE EVER TOLD THIS TO...

...IT WAS 5 YEARS AGO. THAT'S RIGHT... IT'S ALREADY BEEN 5 YEARS...

BACK THEN, I WAALONE IN AN APARTMENTED CLOSE TO MY PARENT'S HOME.

Fanta

大船駅
OFUNA STATION
(東口)

ALTHOUGH I HAD GRADUATED FROM A COLLEGE OF ARTS, I HAD NOT YET FOUND A JOB AND WAS WASTING AWAY MY TIME.

BUT, FORTUNATELY, MY UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR SHOWED ME A JOB

A CERAMICS CLASS WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE FROM THE SUBWAY STATION.
ドン
5
AT THE AGE OF 28, I WAS WORKING AS A CERAMICS CLASS TEACHER.
ドドド

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HARD WORK!!
WE'LL BE LOOKING FORWARD TO NEXT WEEK.
AH, GOOD WORK CLASS.
I WAS FAIRLY WELL-LIKED BACK THEN.
6
UMM. . MR. ONODERA,
WOULD YOU LIKE SOME CREAM PUFFS? I JUST BOUGHT SOME.
AH, SORRY
BUT IT'S FORBIDDEN FOR ME TO ACCEPT ANY GIFTS OF ANY KIND FROM MY STUDENTS.
ESPECIALLY BY A WOMAN NAMED MRS. YAGI.

EVEN THOUGH I'M PAYING THE SAME AMOUNT FOR THESE CLASSES...! THIS IS INJUST FAVOURITISM!
WHY, IF I JUST SAY ONE WORD ABOUT THIS UNFAIR TREATMENT TO THE CITY COUNCIL, HE'LL BE FIRED IMME...
Panasonic
KXT8 - 30W
WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HIM!
THAT MR. ONODERA'S ATTITUDE IS JUST TERRIBLE!!
HE'S NICE TO MRS.OJIMA, MRS.OIKE, AND MRS. SUGAWARA BUT HE'S ACTS SO COLD ONLY TO ME!
I'M SORRY...
AHAHA, THANK YOU AGAIN. I HOPE YOU CAN STILL COME NEXT WEEK...
YES, YES, MRS.YAGI. I'LL BE SURE TO TELL HIM.
THESE STUDENTS ARE TECHNICALLY ARE OUR CUSTOMRERS AS WELL SO IT'D BE GREAT IF YOU TRY TO HANDLE THINGS A LITTLE MORE "APPROPRIATELY"...
MR.ONODERA, YOU'RE JUST A LITTLE BIT TOO SERIOUS, YOU KNOW?
NO, NO. YOU GET THESE KINDS OF PEOPLE FROM TIME TO TIME

WELL, ISN'T THAT NICE.
TO BE SO POPULAR.
H-HEY NOW!!
STOP THAT, WASHIO.
DO YOU KNOW JUST HOW MANY TIMES MORE I'M JEALOUS OF YOU?
TO HAVE SUCH A TALENTED YOUNG PERSON LIKE YOU TEACHING CLASSES HERE IS A WASTE
YOUR PIECES WILL DEFINITELY BECOME VERY VALUABLE IN THE FUTURE.
YOUR CERAMIC PIECES HAVE EVEN BEEN FEATURED IN MAGAZINES...
THOSE WORKS OF MINE...

THEY'RE JUST MERE "THINGS."
THE VALUE AND BEAUTY OF THESE ARE JUST THINGS DECIDED BY PEOPLE AFTER IT WAS CREATED, AM I WRONG?
IT IS WORTHLESS WHEN COMPARED TO THE BEAUTY OF SOMETHING THAT CONSTANTLY CHANGES, LIKE ME.
THAT BEAUTY... IT IS LIKE THE EMOBODIMENT OF "LIFE"...
DON'T YOU THINK THAT THE INSTANT IN WHICH A VASE IS MORPHING UNDER THE HEAT,
IS MUCH MUCH MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN THE FINISHED PRODUCT ITSELF?
I BELIEVE SO...
SUCH A VOLUPTUOUS SHAPE
YET POSSESSING ALSO SUCH DELICATE FINE CURVES

I ALSO WANTED TO CREATE SOMETHING LIKE THAT ONE DAY
YUICHI!
ARE YOU HOME!?
10
ANOTHER PLASTIC MODEL?
OH, SO YOU ARE HERE
WOULD IT HURT YOU TO JUST OPEN THE DOOR?
I'M MISSING JUST ONE PIECE

THE GIRL THAT I WAS DATING BACK THEN WAS SOMEONE I KNEW FROM MY STUDENT DAYS. SHE WAS WORKING AT SOME OFFICE AND LIVING WITH HER PARENTS.
SHE LIKED TO DRINK AND COULD HAVE QUITE THE MEAN STREAK.
...BUT SHE WAS GENERALLY NICE MOST OF THE TIME.
ALRIGHT, I'M GOING TO HEAD HOME
OH, AND IF YOU COULD BE FREE THIS SATURDAY NIGHT, IT'D BE GREAT.
HEY, YOU FORGOT THIS..
GOOD NIGHT

MAGAZINE NAME READS: NEWLYWEDS LIFESTYLE

...THAT WAS MY DAY TO DAY LIFE BACK THEN.

AS THESE PREDICTABLE DAYS PASSED BY,

IT BROUGHT ME CLOSER TO YET ANOTHER BLAND PREDICTABLE DAY.

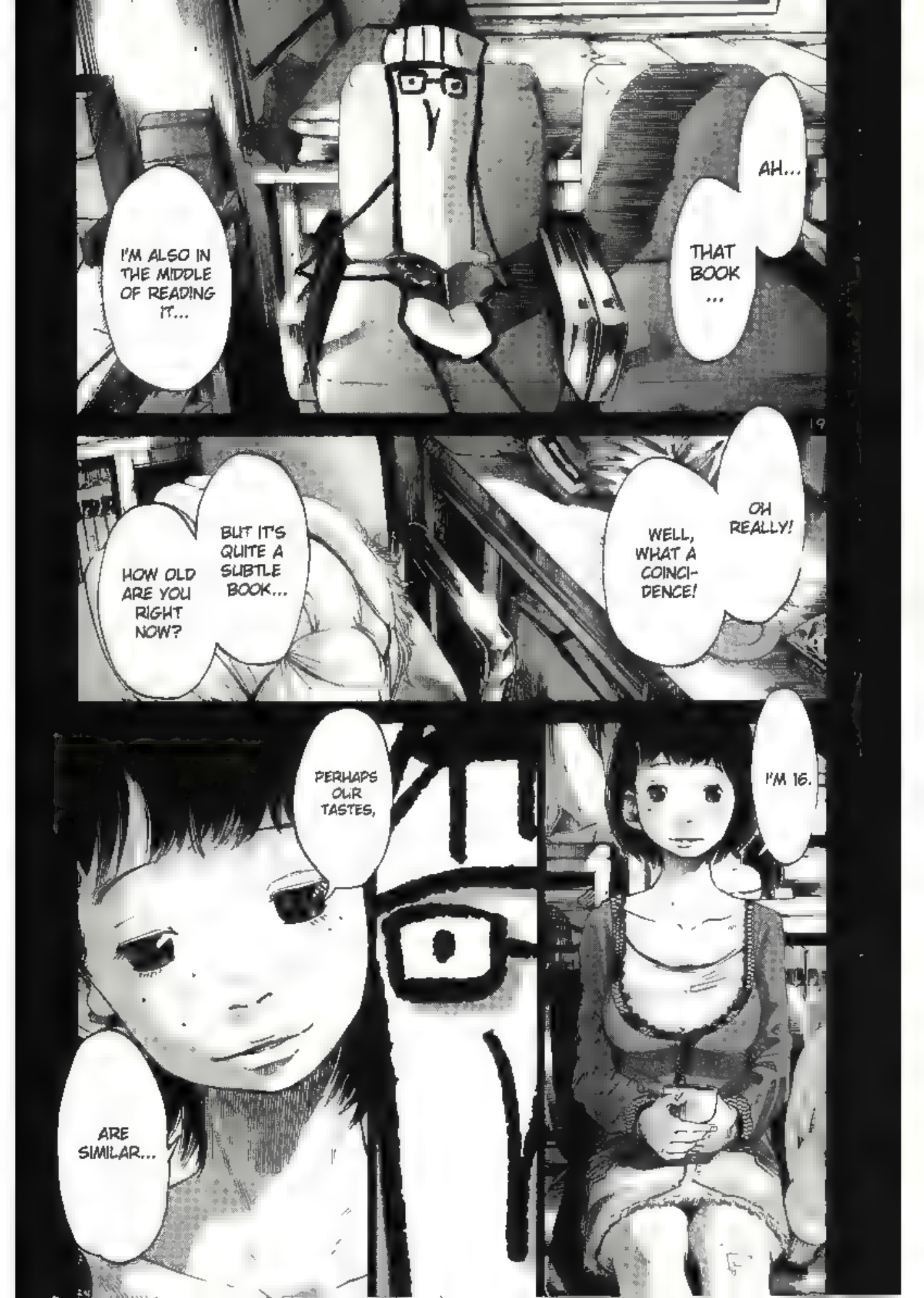
THOUGH I FELT LIKE A JIGSAW PUZZLE MISSING A PIECE,
I CONTINUED ON BELIEVING THAT BEING AN ADULT LIKE THIS WAS TO BE HUMAN.
BY VARIOUS PEOPLE,
WHILE BEING ENTANGLED,
PEOPLE, PEOPLE, PEOPLE,
TRIED MY BEST TO LIVE BY MAINTAINING MY PRESENCE OF MIND.
WHAT WAS WHAT I BELIEVED
...BUT...JUST MAYBE...
夢
安く売ります!!
1コ 100円

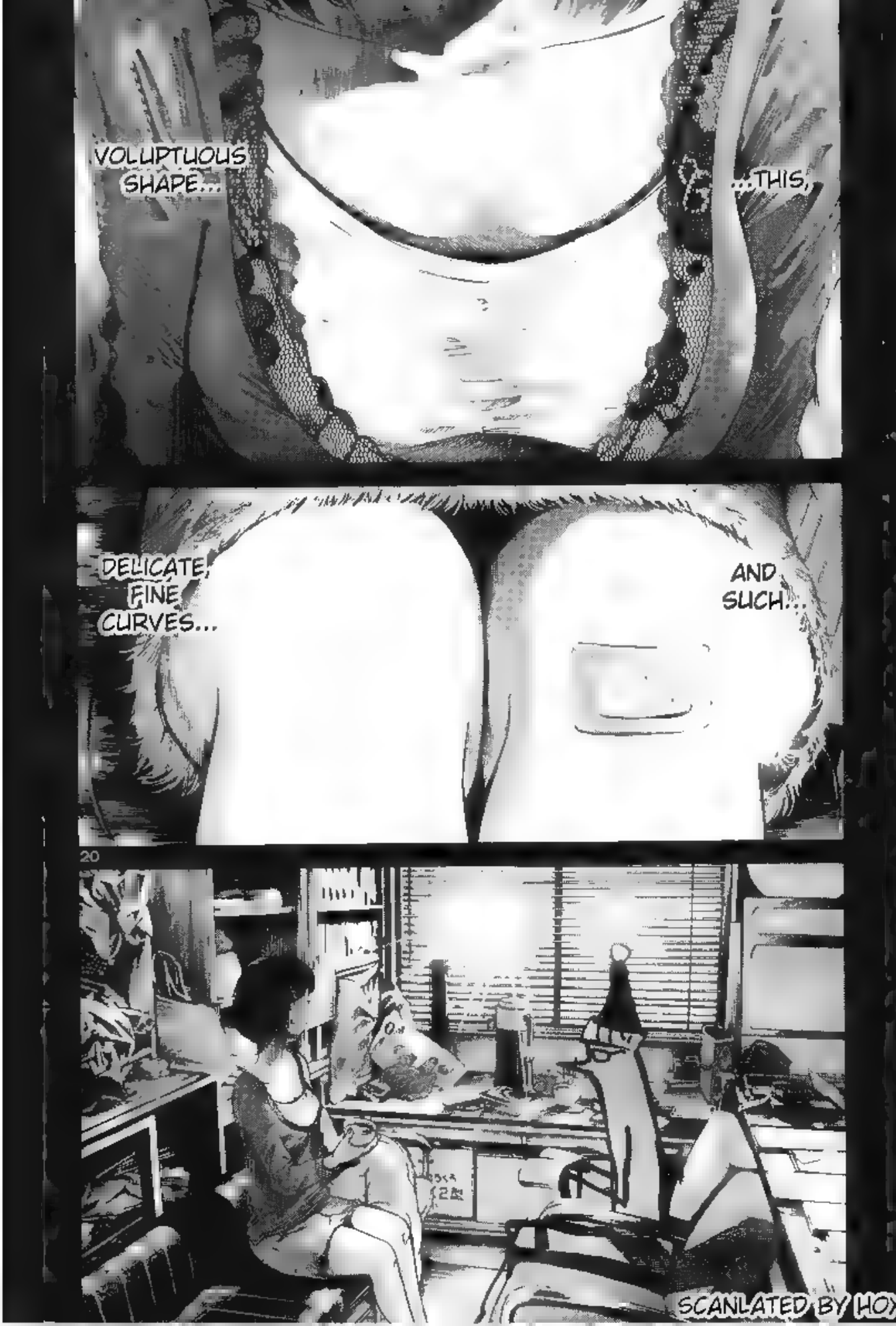
...NO!!
IF I WERE ALRE-ADY,
壊れてしまっているのだとしたら…
BROKEN
....
I AM ME!
WHILE PASSING AWAY THESE DAYS...

16
AH!
MR. ONO-DERA!
THIS IS MY DAUGHTER.
IF POSSIBLE, I'D LIKE FOR YOU TO TEACH HER AS WELL.

OHO HOHO.
THEN MR. ONODERA, EXCUSE ME FOR A LITTLE WHILE...
MRS. OIKE BOUGHT SOME CASTELLA! WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE ONE?
MRS. YAGI!
IT SEEMS THAT SHE'LL MAKE UP ANY EXCUSE TO GET CLOSER TO YOU...
I WAS FORCIBLY DRAGGED OUT HERE
I APOLO-GIZE FOR MY MOTHER...
UMM..

...AH,
IS THAT SO. HAHAHA!
UMM. PLEASE DON'T BE CONCERNED THOUGH..
ONCE MY MOTHER CALMS DOWN, WE'LL RETURN HOME.
AH, NO, NO! NO NEED TO APOLOGIZE!
I WAS JUST BEING TOO CLUELESS! HERE, LET ME POUR YOU SOME TEA.

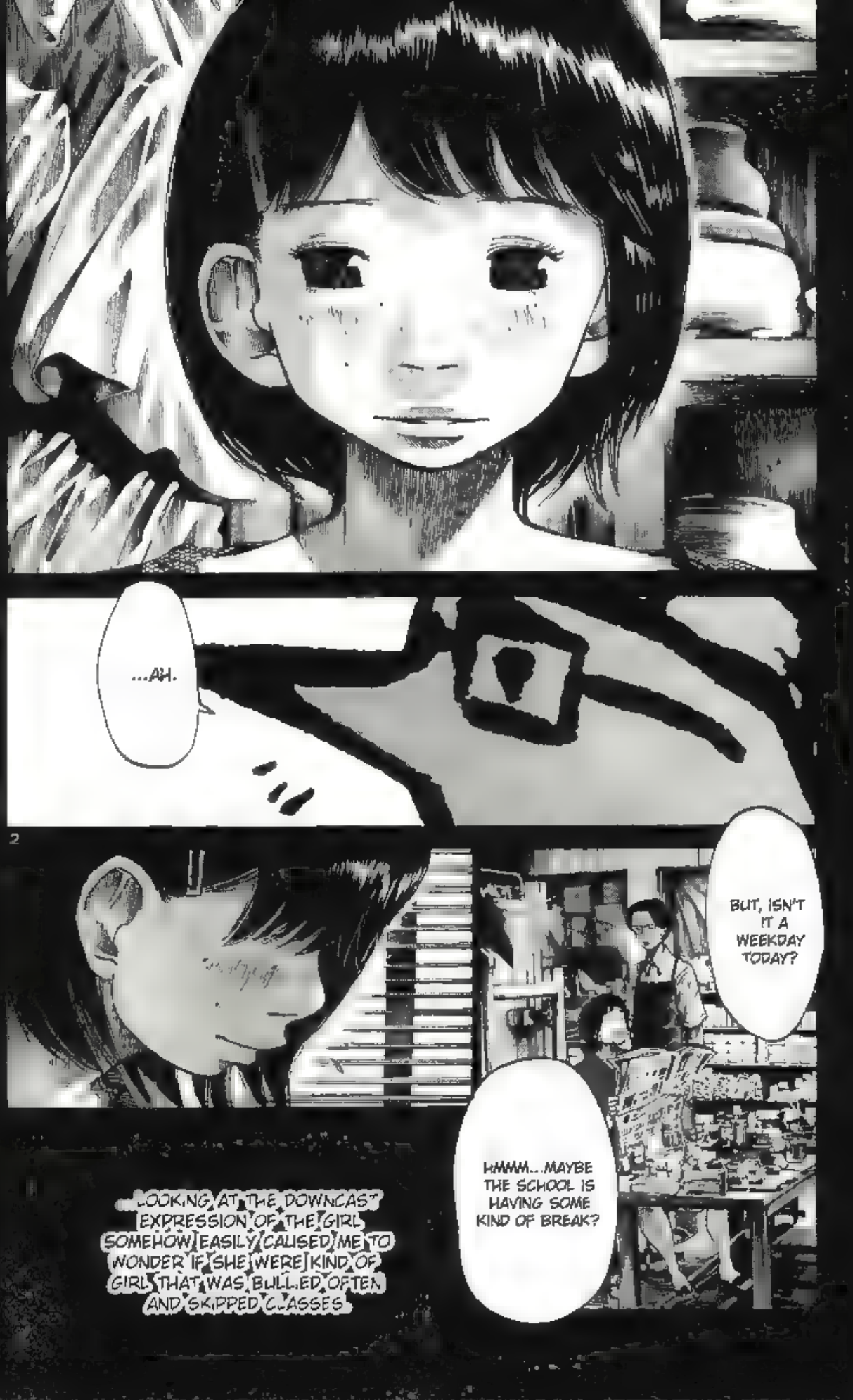

AH...
THAT BOOK ...
I'M ALSO IN THE MIDDLE OF READING IT...
19
OH REALLY!
WELL, WHAT A COINCI-DENCE!
BUT IT'S QUITE A SUBTLE BOOK...
HOW OLD ARE YOU RIGHT NOW?
I'M 16.
PERHAPS OUR TASTES,
ARE SIMILAR...

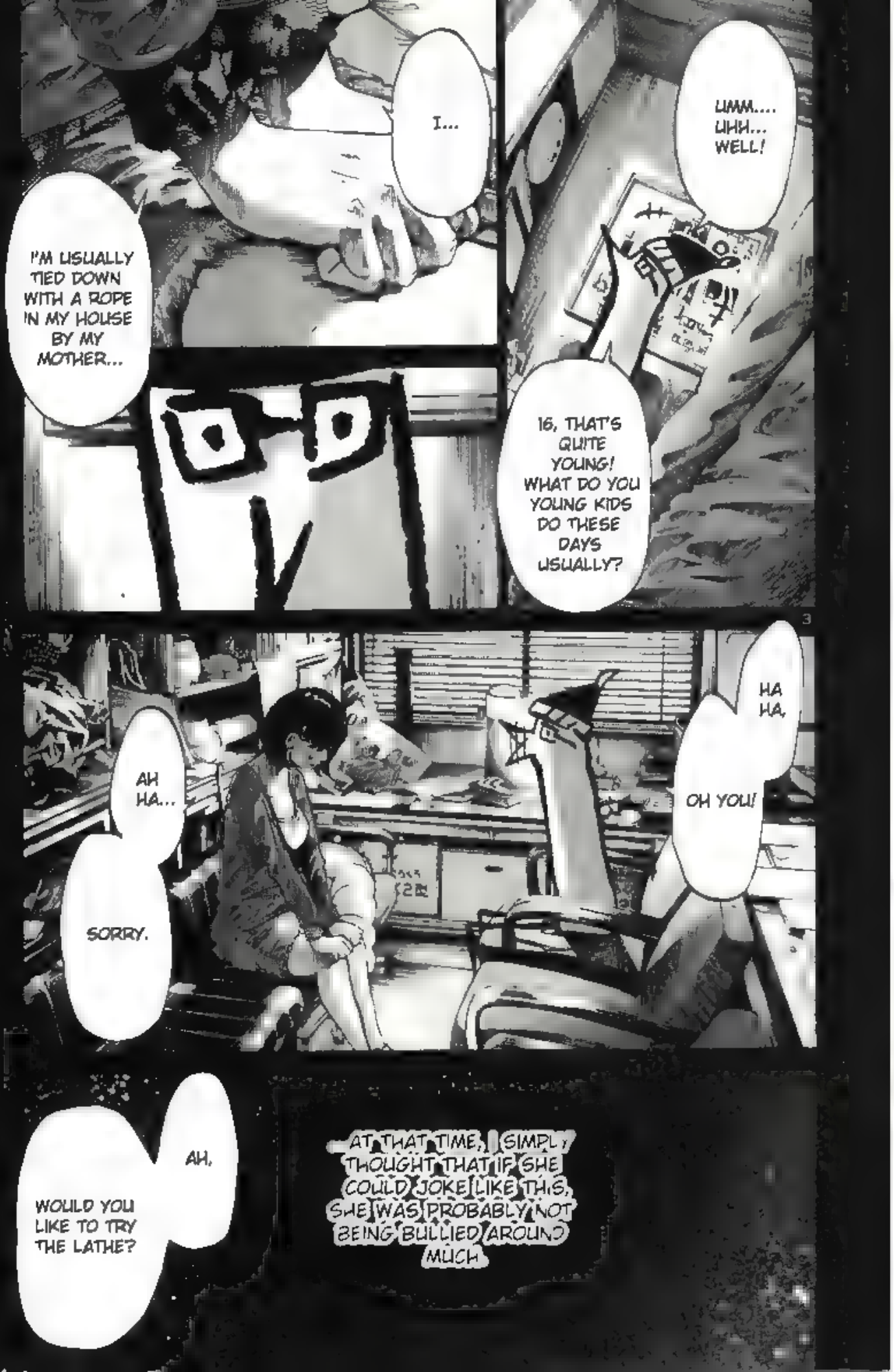


SCANLATED BY HOX

THINKING BACK NOW, THAT GIRL WHO SUDDENLY APPEARED INTO MY ORDINARY LIFE WAS MY DOOR TO THE EXTRAORDINARY.

THIS GIRL WHO WAS YOUNGER THAN ME BY MORE THAN 10 YEARS MIGHT POSSIBLY HAVE BEEN THE PROJECTION OF MY WISH FOR "SOMETHING" THAT I'VE BEEN LONGING FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART.


...AH.
2
BUT, ISN'T IT A WEEKDAY TODAY?
HMMM... MAYBE THE SCHOOL IS HAVING SOME KIND OF BREAK?
LOOKING AT THE DOWNCAST EXPRESSION OF THE GIRL SOMEHOW EASILY CAUSED ME TO WONDER IF SHE WERE KIND OF GIRL THAT WAS BULLIED OFTEN AND SKIPPED CLASSES


I...
I'M USUALLY TIED DOWN WITH A ROPE IN MY HOUSE BY MY MOTHER...
UMM.... UHH... WELL!
16, THAT'S QUITE YOUNG! WHAT DO YOU YOUNG KIDS DO THESE DAYS USUALLY?
3
HA HA,
OH YOU!
AH HA...
SORRY.
AH,
WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRY THE LATHE?
AT THAT TIME, I SIMPLY THOUGHT THAT IF SHE COULD JOKE LIKE THIS, SHE WAS PROBABLY NOT BEING BULLIED AROUND MUCH

WITHIN THE HOT HUMID WEATHER OF JULY, HER SCENT, HER WARMTH...

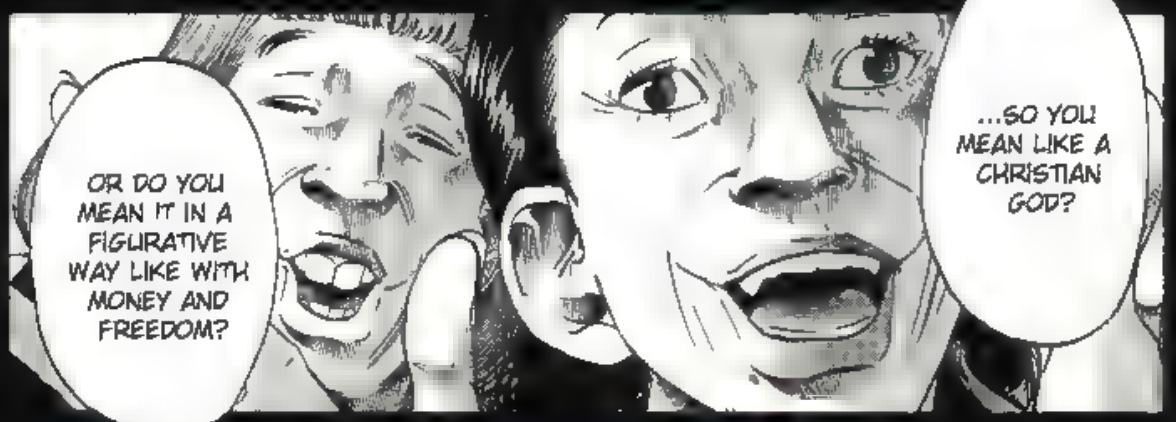
HER PALE WHITE SKIN THAT LOOKED SO DELICATE THAT IT WOULD BREAK FROM JUST A SINGLE TOUCH, CAUSED A BIOLOGICAL REACTION WITHIN ME

I...
むっ
むっ
むっ
I'LL TRUTHFULLY CONFESS!
激...I HAD!!く!!
勃起AN EREC-TION!だ!!

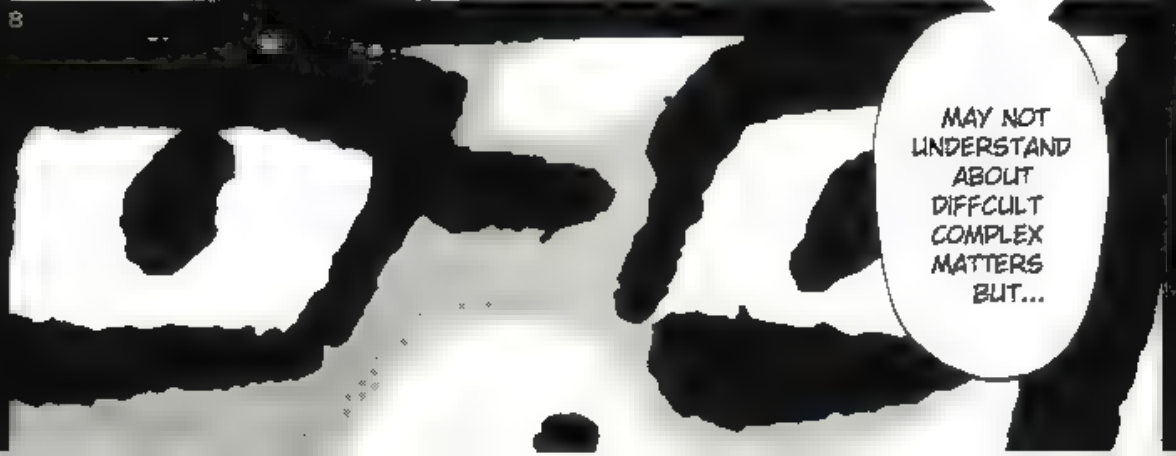
MR. ONODERA!! YOU HAVE A PHONE CALL!!
OH, IT'S YOU SISTER... I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF WORK...
HUH?
PUMPUM HASN'T RETURNED HOME FROM SCHOOL?
...ALRIGHT! I'LL GO OVER THERE SOON!
UMM ...
SOMETHING URGENT CAME UP SUDDENLY AND IT LOOKS LIKE I'LL HAVE TO GO
APOLOGIZE FOR THE INCONVE-NIENCE...
I REALLY WOULD HAVE LIKED TO TEACH YOU MORE TECH-NIQUES ON THINGS SUCH AS GLAZING.
I WON'T MIND IF YOU COME WITHOUT YOUR MOTHER NEXT TIME SO.
PLEASE COME AGAIN!!

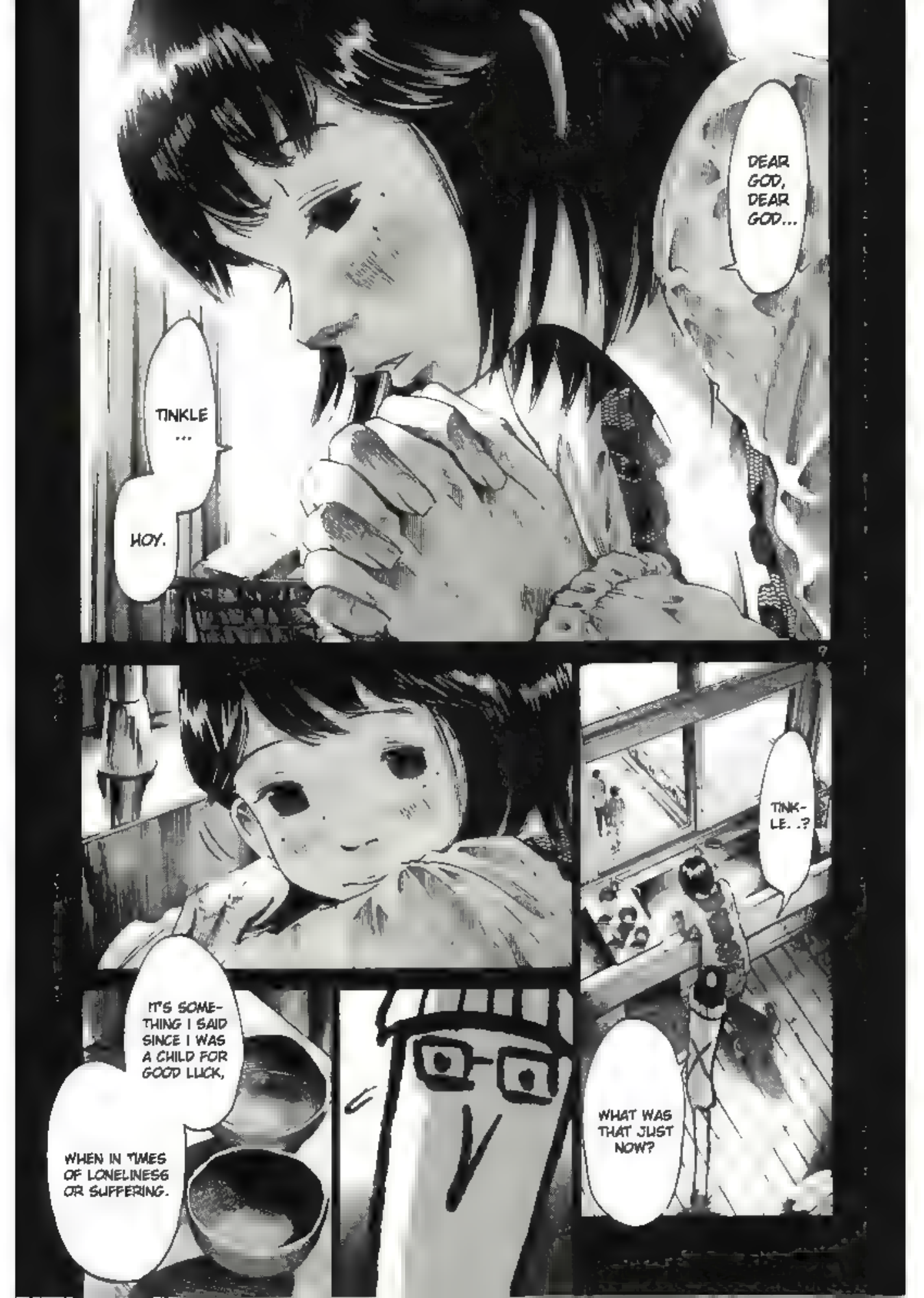
AH...OF COURSE ...
THAT IS, IF IT'S FINE WITH YOU...
...MR. ONOD-ERA,
DO YOU BELIEVE IN GOD...?
...HUH?

I'VE NEVER REALLY THOGUHT ABOUT IT...
...WELL,
...GOD?

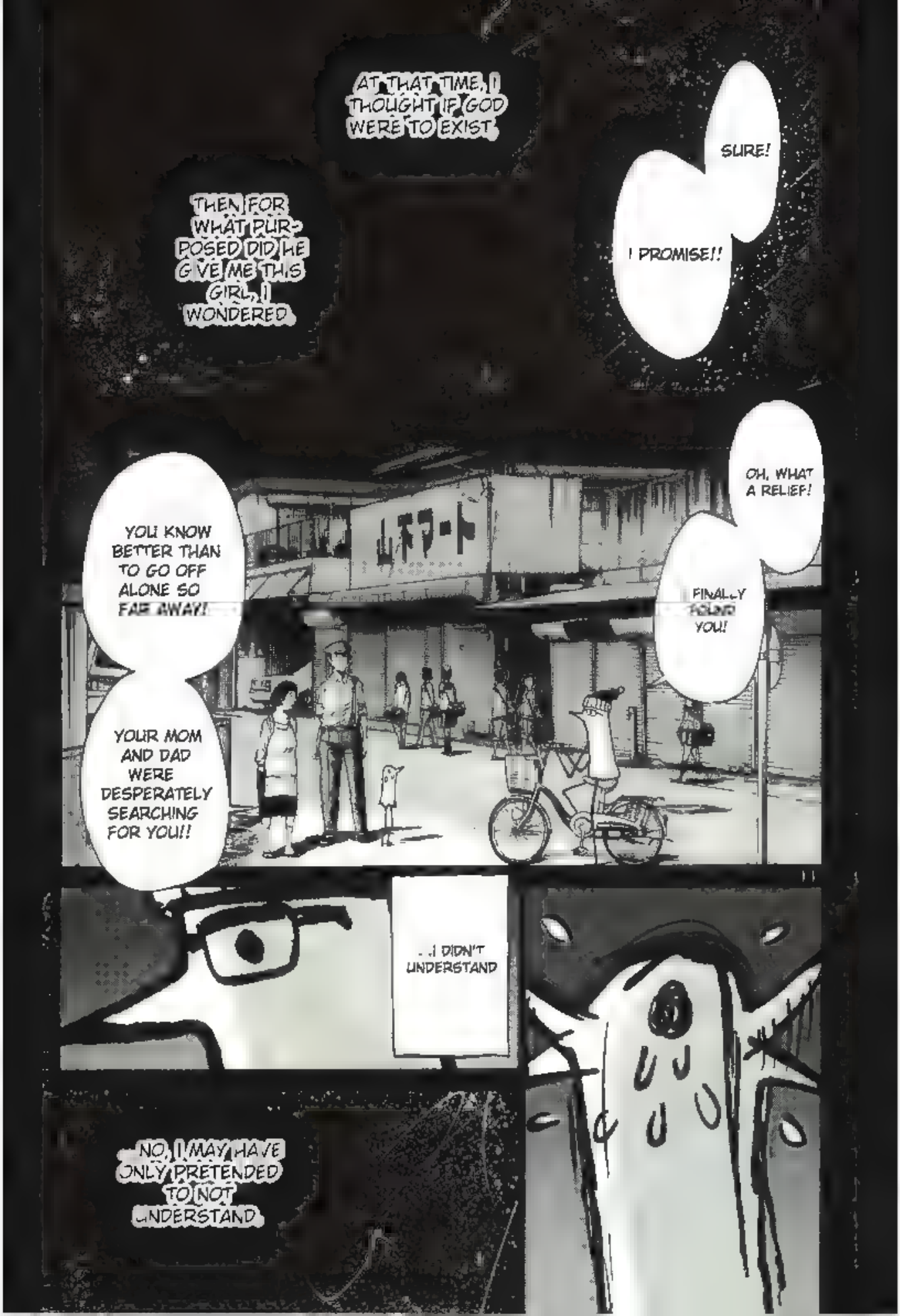

OR DO YOU MEAN IT IN A FIGURATIVE WAY LIKE WITH MONEY AND FREEDOM?
...SO YOU MEAN LIKE A CHRISTIAN GOD?

I...


MAY NOT UNDERSTAND ABOUT DIFFCULT COMPLEX MATTERS BUT...

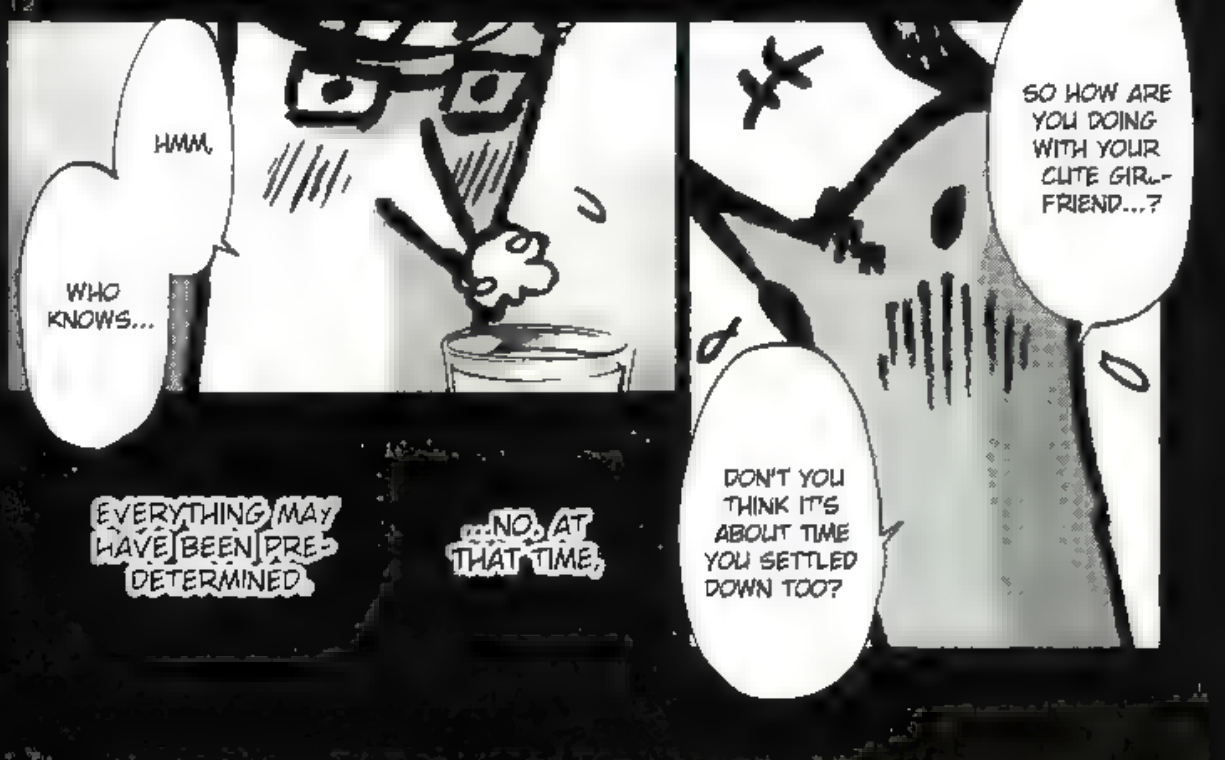

DEAR GOD, DEAR GOD...
TINKLE ...
HOY.
TINK-LE..?
WHAT WAS THAT JUST NOW?
IT'S SOME-THING I SAID SINCE I WAS A CHILD FOR GOOD LUCK,
WHEN IN TIMES OF LONELINESS OR SUFFERING.

I HATED THE FACT THAT I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO RELY ON SUCH AN UNDEPENDABLE, INVISIBLE GOD.
AND NO MATTER HOW DESPERATELY I PRAY, NOTHING EVER GOOD HAPPENS,
BUT I'VE NEVER ONCE ACTUALLY SEEN GOD,
THAT I FELT LIKE GOD EXISTED.
...BUT TODAY WAS THE FIRST TIME,
10
. IF I GO TO SCHOOL.
WILL YOU GO OUT WITH ME?
AND MAKE SURE YOU GO TO SCHOOL PROPERLY!
A-ANYWAYS, PLEASE COME AGAIN!

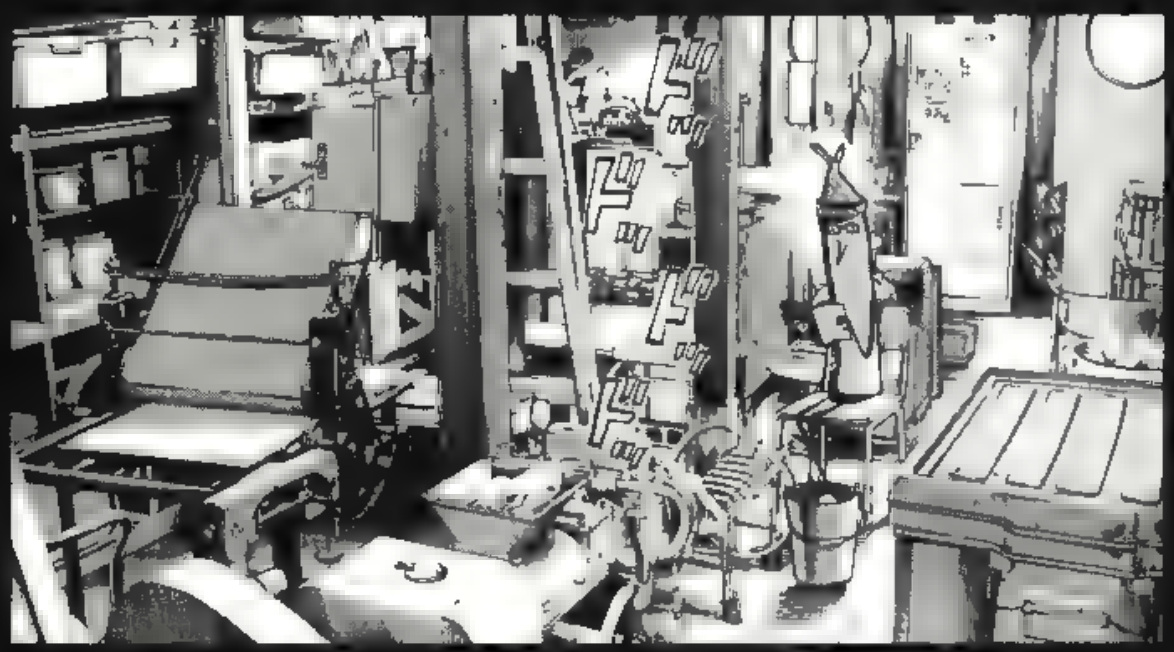

AT THAT TIME, I THOUGHT IF GOD WERE TO EXIST
THEN FOR WHAT PURPOSED DID HE GIVE ME THIS GIRL, I WONDERED
SURE!
I PROMISE!!
OH, WHAT A RELIEF!
FINALLY FOUND YOU!
YOU KNOW BETTER THAN TO GO OFF ALONE SO FAR AWAY!
YOUR MOM AND DAD WERE DESPERATELY SEARCHING FOR YOU!!
...I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND
NO, I MAY HAVE ONLY PRETENDED TO NOT UNDERSTAND

OH, YUICHI!
I'M SO SORRY ABOUT TODAY BUT YOU REALLY HELPED US OUT!!
SO COME ON, DRINK AS MUCH AS YOU WANT!!
CHRYSLER
TURBO BEER

LET ME POUR YOU A DRINK.
TELL ME WHEN TO STOP
...STOP.

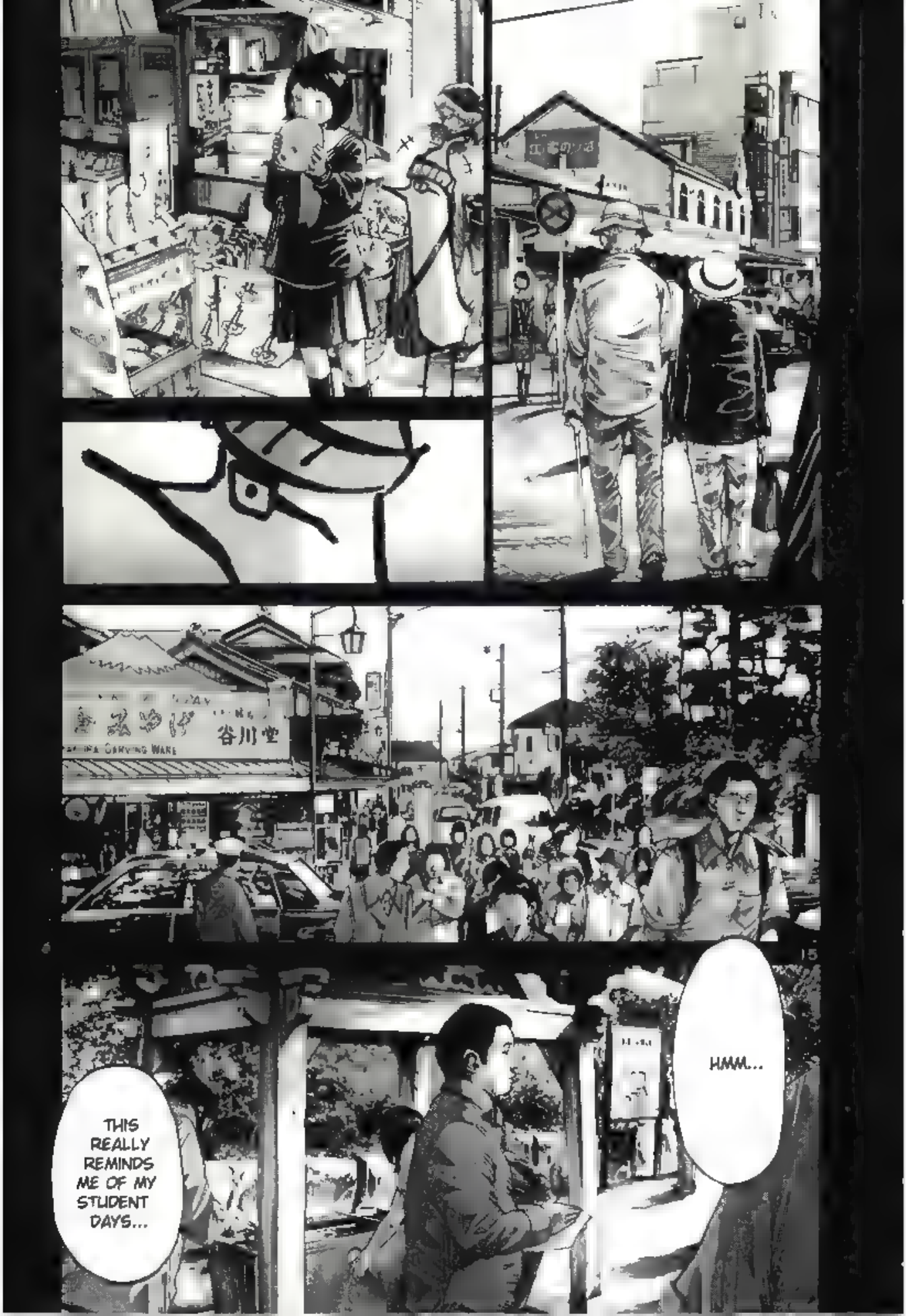

SO HOW ARE YOU DOING WITH YOUR CUTE GIRL-FRIEND...?
DON'T YOU THINK IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU SETTLED DOWN TOO?
HMM.
WHO KNOWS...
EVERYTHING MAY HAVE BEEN PRE-DETERMINED.
...NO. AT THAT TIME.

新規会員募集



UMM...
WE'RE CLOSED ON SATUDRAY MORNINGS.

14
...HELLO.
...DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR PROMISE?


谷川堂
HMM...
THIS REALLY REMINDS ME OF MY STUDENT DAYS...

MR.ONO-DERA,
WHAT KIND OF STUDENT WERE YOU?
..ME?
WELL.. MAYBE I WAS JUST A REGULAR STUDENT

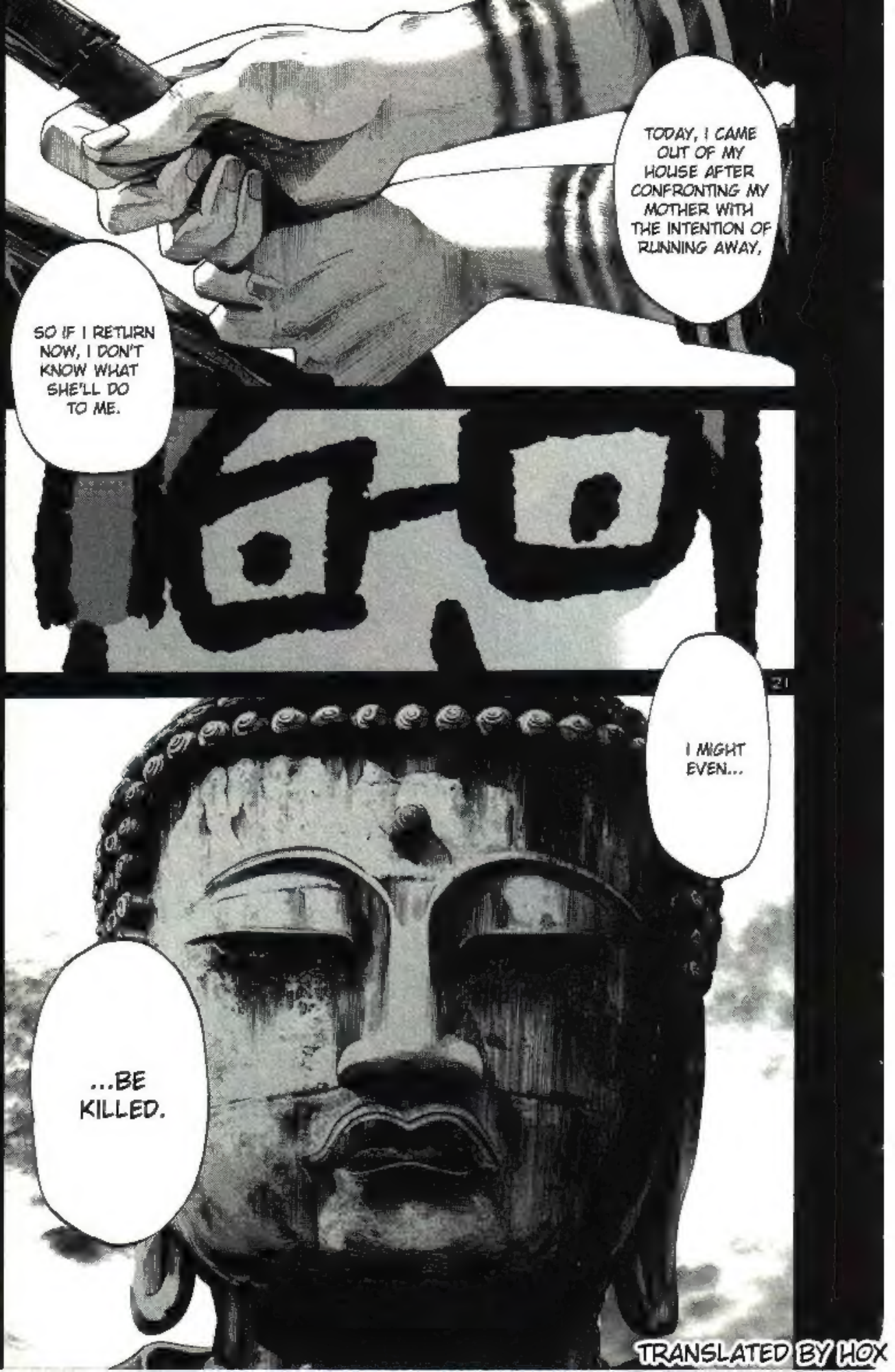
..I BELIEVED THAT I WAS DIFFERENT FROM THE REST AND HAD SOMETHING SPECIAL AND I TRIED TO FIND THAT THING.
WHEN I LOOK BACK ON MY FOOLISH PAST SELF NOW,
I JUST COVER IT UP BY SAYING I WAS YOUNG
NOWA-DAYS..
I'M JUST LIKE WATER IN A VASE, WAITING UNTIL ITS SURFACE TENSION IS BROKEN AND STARTS TO OVERFLOW...
I SPEND MY DAYS LIVING IN FEAR FOR WHEN MY HEART WILL ALSO OVERFLOW AND SPILL.

..WELL, I CAN STILL DEAL WITH IT,
BUT I'M NOT EXACTLY SATISFIED.
ARE YOU...
NOT HAPPY WITH YOUR LIFE RIGHT NOW?
I JUST.. WANT TO LIVE IN A PLACE WHERE I NEED ONLY FOCUS ON POTTERY.
.BUT ONCE YOU GROW OLD,
YOU BECOME AFRAID OF EVEN LOSING THINGS WITHOUT ANY VALUE.
17
SORRY,
I SHOULDN'T HAVE TALKED ABOUT SUCH BORING THINGS. I THINK WE SHOULD HEAD BACK FOR TODAY

FOR ME,
HAPPINESS IS JUST SPENDING TIME WITH THE ONE I LOVE.
WHAT IS...
HAPPINESS FOR YOU?
AM 8:00 ~ PM 4:30
18
I SEE...
SO JUST TRY YOUR BEST STARTING FROM TOMORROW!
SO DON'T BE TOO BOTHERED BY STUFF LIKE BEING BULLIED!
IF IT'S YOU, YOU'LL BE FINE!!
I'M SURE YOU'LL BE ABLE TO FIND YOUR HAPPINESS SOMEDAY!

...I'M,
NOT BEING BULLIED AT ALL ACTUALLY.
19
...A BOY IN MY CLASS GOT ME PREGNANT,
AND I HAD AN ABORTION HALF A YEAR AGO.

IT'S ALR-IGHT.
EVEN IF MY FRIENDS TREAT ME COLDLY... EVEN IF EVERYONE TALKS BEHIND MY BACK...
HIGHSCHOOL IS ONLY JUST 3 YEARS.
BUT MY MOM...
SHE'S A LITTLE BIT UNBAL-ANCED...
SHE REALLY DOES KEEP ME TIED UP AT HOME,
SO NOTHING BAD CAN HARM ME ANY MORE.
I'M JUST ...
WATCHING THE DAYS GO BY AS I'M ISOLATED IN SUCH A CRAMPED ROOM...


TODAY, I CAME OUT OF MY HOUSE AFTER CONFRONTING MY MOTHER WITH THE INTENTION OF RUNNING AWAY,
SO IF I RETURN NOW, I DON'T KNOW WHAT SHE'LL DO TO ME.
I MIGHT EVEN...
...BE KILLED.
TRANSLATED BY HOX